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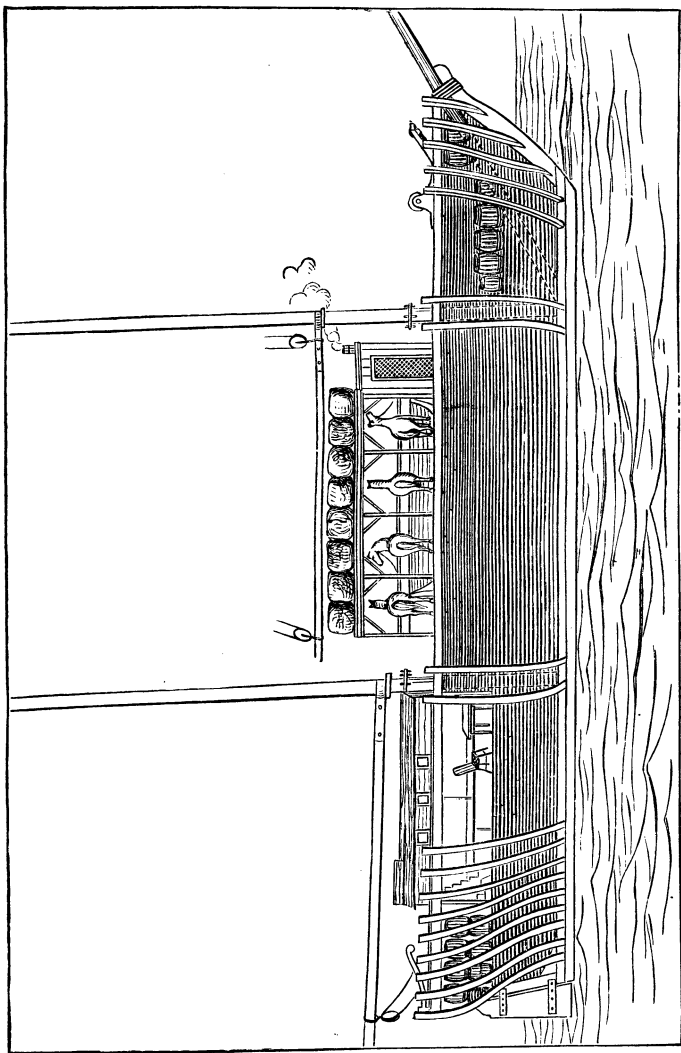
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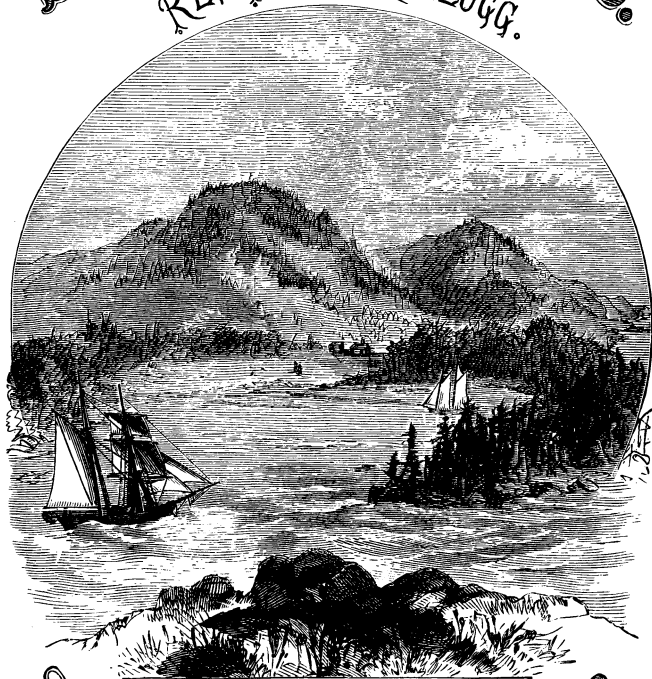
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ELM ISLAND STORIES

BY
REV. ELIJAH KELLOGG.



THE ARK & ELM ISLAND
JOHN ANDREW — SON
LEE & SHEPARD BOSTON.

ELM ISLAND STORIES.

THE ARK OF ELM ISLAND.

BY

REV. ELIJAH KELLOGG,

AUTHOR OF "SPARTACUS TO THE GLADIATORS,"
"GOOD OLD TIMES," ETC.

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ELECTROTYPED AT THE
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TO

MY YOUNG FRIEND,

ARTHUR P. DANA, OF WELLESLEY,

This Book

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

ELM ISLAND STORIES.

1. LION BEN OF ELM ISLAND.
2. CHARLIE BELL, THE WAIF OF ELM ISLAND.
3. THE ARK OF ELM ISLAND.
4. THE BOY FARMERS OF ELM ISLAND.

Others in preparation.

P R E F A C E.

THIS volume of the "Elm Island Stories" chronicles the success of "Lion Ben," in his bold endeavor to supply, by inventive shrewdness, the lack of money, and make his lumber carry itself to a foreign market. It illustrates the manner in which our ancestors, possessed of little or no capital, in the absence of a protective policy, struggling with the difficulties of a deranged currency, in the face of foreign competition, notwithstanding, conquered difficulties, and wrung from the very necessities of their position a competence, and even affluence; showing also the wonderful versatility and power of combining different kinds

of labor, which pertain to American character; the gradual growth of temperance principles from inferior beginnings; the influences by which those resolute spirits, who laid the foundations of our immense commerce, and fought in the war of 1812, to protect it, were trained; and that industry, integrity, and self-reliance as surely lead to success on the sea as on the land.

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THE ARK OF ELM ISLAND.

CHAPTER I.

THE ARK IN A GALE.

It was midnight in the Gulf Stream: the Ark, under reefed sails, was doing her best to keep out of the way of the sea, which, following, threatened to break over her; twisting like a basket, she groaned and creaked in the heavy surf, and seemed alive in every board.

"I believe the jade will spill us," said Joe Griffin. "What'll you take for your venture, Seth Warren? I'll sell mine for a pistareen. She works like an old logging sled among the 'cradle-knolls.'"

It was raining as it can rain only in the Gulf; the lightning came not at intervals, but seemed to fill the whole horizon with one continuous blaze, accompanied by heavy peals of thunder.

The starboard watch was on deck, consisting of only two men, — Joe Griffin and Seth Warren, —

with a boy of seventeen, by the name of Murch — a nephew of Uncle Isaac, and named for him. Isaac, though a boy in years, was by no means green; and, by the time he was ten years of age, he had been accustomed to paddle about the shores, often going on gunning expeditions with his uncle and Captain Rhines. Whenever Isaac, who lived at the other extremity of the town, paid a visit to his uncle, he always came over to Captain Rhines's to play with John. The captain was very fond of Isaac, and predicted that he would make a very smart man. His prediction was grounded on the following circumstance: Isaac had spent the afternoon at Captain Rhines's, and was returning after supper to his uncle's; it was a bright moonlight evening; and, as he was crossing a large, clear field, skirted by a deep gully heavily wooded, he saw a skunk just before him, striving to gain the shelter of the gully; he endeavored to find a stone or a club, but in vain, for it was late in the year, and every stone was fastened by the frost; nor was a stick to be found in the mowing field. All this time the skunk was nearing the gully; Isaac saw that, long before he could go to the log fence, the animal would be beyond his reach; he reflected a moment, for he had on his

go-to-meeting best. It was but for a moment. Crying out, "One, two three; three times goes it!" he broke into a dead run, and jumped both feet on to his antagonist. Had Isaac received his enemy's fire in his eyes, as he did on his clothes, it would probably have made him blind for life. He soon despatched the skunk with his heavy boots; but after excitement came the hour of sober reflection: he could scarcely breathe, and his approach was readily perceived at the distance of half a mile. There were other circumstances that rendered his reflections more pungent; his parents were rather poor, had hard work to clothe a large family, and he was seven miles from home on a visit.

"What a fool I was!" said Isaac; "but I'm glad I killed him: who's going to take a stump from a skunk?"

"Hannah," said Uncle Isaac, coming in with an armful of wood, "did you put those late chickens in the barrel?"

"No; I forgot it."

"Then I will, for there's skunks round."

As he proceeded to the barn to discharge this duty, Isaac cried out, "Uncle, I've killed a skunk! I ain't coming into the house; I'm going right straight home."

But Uncle Isaac would by no means consent to this, but directed him to go into the barn, where he brought him a shift of clothes, soap, and hot water.

“What shall I do with my clothes, uncle?” asked Isaac. “Mother wove ’em this fall; ’twas the last cloth she had in the house.”

“There’s no trouble about that;” and, cutting through the frozen ground, he made a hole of sufficient size to contain the clothes, and buried them up, assuring his nephew that the ground would take every mite of the smell out in three days.

The summer the Ark was built, this youngster had been on a fishing voyage to the Bay of Chaleur. After his return, he had an opportunity to go in a vessel from Portland with a relative; he was to meet the captain at Wiscasset to arrange matters; on his way there, he stopped a night at his uncle’s. Ever since the encounter with the skunk, Captain Rhines had considered Isaac’s success in life as settled.

In the evening, going over with his wife to Uncle Isaac’s, he found the boy there.

“Well,” said the captain, “are you going to school now?”

“No, sir. I’m on my way to Wiscasset, to see

Captain Savage. I've had some talk about going with him in the Leonidas."

"You'd better go with me. I want just such a chap, so smart, that when he goes to jump on a horse, he'll jump right over him."

"But how shall I get home?"

"I'll find you a chance to get home, or, in a good ship, to go somewhere else."

"There'll be nothing to do in the Ark, except to haul boom-tackles and tend jib-sheets. I want to go in a square-rigged vessel, and learn seamanship."

"I'll learn you navigation and the use of instruments."

The boy longed to go. All the crew were his neighbors; and, as for Captain Rhines, he worshipped him; but there was one difficulty which seemed to him insuperable.

At length he said, "Captain Rhines, I'm very much obliged to you for your good opinion of me, but the stick is just here; my parents are not very well off, and there's a large family of us. I am the oldest boy, and must earn all I can to help them; you give very small wages, and allow your men a privilege. Now, I've got nothing to carry to sell in the West Indies to make out my wages."

"But," said his uncle, "I'll give you something

to carry, and as much as any man before the mast in that vessel, for you're a good striving boy, if you are my nephew."

"Then I'll go, with all my heart and soul!" cried Isaac, unable to contain his delight. "I'll go right home in the morning, and go to school till the Ark is ready."

When Captain Rhines rose to go home, he missed the boy. "Where is he gone?" asked the captain; "to bed?"

"To bed!" said Uncle Isaac; "he'll not shut his eyes this night, till he's been to Joe Griffin's, and told him, and all the rest, that he's going with 'em in the Ark."

Seth Warren, indeed, was called second mate, by which was merely meant, that he took charge of the captain's watch whenever he saw fit to go below, for Captain Rhines stood his own watch. In the larboard watch were Robert Yelf and Sam Edwards; the cook also — a negro of great strength, and a thorough seaman — mustered with the mate's watch, but was not called, except in bad weather.

"Ay, that thrapping does the business," said the captain, contemplating with great satisfaction, by the glare of the lightning, the voluminous turns of

the hawser; "if these sails and masts only stand, she'll make very good weather of it. Call the watch, Isaac, and then go to the galley, and rouse out the cook—not but what Joe steers well enough, but it will blow harder after twelve o'clock, and there's not the equal of that ducky to scud a vessel in bad weather. Now, Flour," said he, "I've got you at the tiller, I'm going to turn in. Call me, Mr. Strout, if the weather gets any worse."

"Nebber you fear this nigger, massa; she go all right when ole Flour get the stick. Me steer anything but my ole woman; she one Guinea nigger. I give her much wheel or little wheel, make no odds, she 'come to' on me anyhow."

He had slept about an hour, when the mate waked him, and said, "Captain Rhines, I wish you would come on deck; it's screeching right out; there's a very bad sea, and I fear it will board us over the stern. We must shake out these reefs," said the mate, as the captain came on deck; "this sail will never keep her out of the way of the sea."

"It can't be done; the sails are second-hand, all of them; and, if we start them, they will go to ribbons in a moment. The foresail is much worn; if we should split it, she would broach to."

"Why not heave her to?"

"I don't think she would lay well. Besides, we are going on our course."

"But if we should ship one of these seas, it will clear our decks, if it don't tear her to pieces."

"Well, Mr. Strout, these seas ain't a-coming in here. I don't want 'em, and won't have 'em. Why, here are your horses, Charlie's baskets and turnips, Joe Griffin's sheep, and half the old women's stuff in town. What a muss it would make to have that all overboard together!"

"I don't see how you will help it," replied the mate, who began to think that the imminence of the peril had turned the captain's brains.

"Sam Edwards," cried the captain, "do you and Bob roll that barrel of ile aft here as quick as possible, and bring a long lashing with it."

While the barrel was coming along, he went below, and came up with a nail gimlet, with which he bored a hole in the head of the barrel, and ordered the men to lash it on the taffrail and amidships.

The mate looked on in amazement, feeling now assured that the captain had lost his wits; but he had little time for speculation. Scarcely was the barrel secured, when, looking astern, he saw an enormous wave, rising far above the vessel, and knew from experience that it was going to break.

"Look out for yourselves!" he shouted, catching hold of the after shroud; "it's coming!"

"Don't leave the helm, Flour!" cried the captain.

"No dodge about me, massa," replied the noble fellow, taking a firm grip of the tiller-ropes.

Along came the wave, with white foam on its edge, black and terrible below, while each man held his breath, all, except the captain, expecting to lose their property, if not their lives.

To their astonishment, when the breaker met the thin films of oil spread over the surface of the waters, after lifting the Ark almost on end, it subsided without breaking.

"Why didn't that sea come in?" asked the mate, rubbing his eyes with amazement, while he drew a long breath.

"That's what I should like to know," said Joe Griffin, who had come up at the alarm.

"Because it couldn't," replied the captain; "it wanted to bad enough, but the ile wouldn't let it. Didn't I tell you I wouldn't have Flour's onions, and old Aunt Molly Bradish's butter, spilt here in the Gulf?"

"Well, that beats all my going to sea," said the mate. "I was in the Fairtrader, of Nantucket,

homeward bound, all our butts full of ile — enough to have greased the whole Pacific at the rate you put it on to-night. We shipped a sea over the stern that swept her decks, started the stern-post and whole stern frame. We were forced to leave her with what we stood in, glad to save ourselves. If we had only known that! But how does that keep the sea from breaking?"

"Is it not hard work to hold a greased pig?"

"Yes."

"Well, I greased the water, so that the wind couldn't get its fingers under it so well to take it up and fling it on us."

"That barrel of ile has been the greatest puzzle to me," said Joe Griffin. "Did you bring it out just for that purpose?"

"Just for that purpose, Joe, and nothing else. I knew, that being low in the water, and less lively than a regular built vessel, with none too much sail, she would be liable to ship a sea astern. I've known of a sea taking the masts out of a ship, and ripping up the decks."

"But how did you know the ile would have that effect?"

"When I was a boy, I went cook in the pinkie Good Content with old Skipper Brown. We had

a terrible gale on the Banks in shoal water; the sea broke all around us; scores of poor fellows — our neighbors — found their graves in the ocean that night; but the old man saved himself and all of us by just so simple a thing as that. You don't think I would be likely ever to forget it?"

"But how did he find it out?"

"He told us, after the gale was over, that when he was a boy, there were two things he loved best of all to do; one was, to catch lobsters in a hoop-net, and the other, to sail his little boats in the cove before their house. One day he wanted some flounders very much to bait his traps; but there was a breeze that made the water so rough that he couldn't see them on the bottom so as to spear them. His grandfather was down there, sitting on a rock watching him. 'Put a leetle ile on the water, Bobby,' said the old gentleman, 'and you can see the bottom.' He did so, and found it made the water calm. The cove lay right open to the sea, and was quite a rough place, even when there was not a great deal of wind, which troubled him very much, as the sea upset his boats. He thought he would try the ile, when he found that it kept the sea down; but he used so much that his father put a stop to it. But he never forgot it,

and when that gale came on, thought he would try it."

"The day we took the Ark over to the main land," said Joe, "everybody in town came to look at her, and were passing their opinions, some for, and others against. I heard old Uncle Pettigrew ask Uncle Isaac Murch what made him feel so sure she would go safe. 'Because,' he said, 'a lucky man's going in her.' But it seems to me, after all, the luck is in a good lookout."

Joe had opportunity to become still more satisfied of the soundness of that opinion before the end of the voyage. We would remark, for the benefit of our readers, who may be unacquainted with seafaring matters, that the only waves which seamen dread are those that break — that is, that rise up perpendicularly, and then curl over. The sea, as sailors say, has no foot to it, that is, no gradual rise for the vessel to mount on. When a wave has a regular rise to it, like a hill, if it is forward of the ship, she will rise upon it: if it comes after, it will run under her stern, lift and force her ahead; but if it breaks, comes up, and curls over, before she can get out of the way, it will come on board and make mischief enough. Such seas scarcely ever board a ship without doing more or less dam-

age, and are sure to swamp an open boat. Those "ugly combing seas," as sailors call them, only come occasionally; so that, if a vessel escapes one or two, she may go safely through a whole gale.

Some years ago, the vessel of a friend of mine, deep loaded with plaster, was struck by one of these seas, and her whole stern shattered almost to the water's edge. He said, after that there was not another sea that would have hurt a yawl, and had that single one fallen short of them, he would have gone safe, whereas he had to leave her.

Oil does not prevent the heave and swell of the sea; the waves rise and fall as before, but they don't comb and break into the vessel.

Captain Rhines, now feeling that everything was going on well, went below again.

As in the previous volume, — "Charlie Bell," — no description was given of the accommodations of the ship's company, let us go below with the captain, and see where and how our good friends lived and berthed.

First, however, in courtesy to those of our readers who may not have seen the previous volume, we will briefly refer to the manner in which the Ark was built, and the reasons which prompted to this hazardous experiment. It was not with Lion

Ben, the originator of it, a mere matter of dollars and cents, though pecuniary reasons, no doubt, had their due weight in the plan.

With very limited resources, he had married a beautiful and energetic woman, bought Elm Island on credit, giving a mortgage, and hoping to pay for it by cutting and selling the masts, spars, and other lumber of rare quality and enormous size, which it produced; thus obtaining the land for a farm, together with that portion of the growth, not suitable for manufacture, for his fire. But Ben loved this little gem of the stormy Atlantic; and, in order to obviate the necessity of stripping it, diminishing the fertility of the soil, exposing it to tempests, drying up the springs, and defacing its beauty, he built the Ark, that by this wholesale economy in the carriage of his lumber, and by selling it himself, without the aid of middle-men, he might liquidate his debt, by clearing only so much of the island as was required for tillage.

The Ark was merely the partial skeleton of a vessel, built in the strongest manner, at the least expense compatible with strength, as, upon her arrival at Havana, she was to be sold with her contents, or broken up and disposed of in piecemeals.

Her bow and stern were sheathed to diminish the friction. She had a few frames; was decked over at the extreme ends, and at the masts, with very heavy wales; an enormous breast-hook forward, to which was secured some large timbers, which ran the whole length of the vessel, and were fastened to the stern frame, to secure her from bending, or, in carpenter phrase, "hogging," and was rigged like a fore-and-aft schooner. Into this frame was piled the lumber, with some cedar and a few empty hogsheads, to increase the buoyancy; and she was frapped over all amidships with a hawser.

It was, indeed, a risk of no ordinary magnitude to encounter in this clumsy structure the waves of the Gulf Stream — a portion of the Atlantic, which, though often calm as a summer lake, is proverbially treacherous, and quickly wrought into fury. Our surprise, however, is moderated when we consider the period and the people.

It was just after the Revolution. The contriver and executor of this enterprise belonged to that race of whom Burke said, in the House of Commons, "We know that while some of them draw the line and strike the harpoon on the coast of Africa, others run the longitude, and pursue their

gigantic game along the coast of Brazil. Neither the perseverance of Holland, the activity of France, nor the dexterous and firm sagacity of English enterprise, ever carried this most perilous mode of hardy industry to the extent to which it has been pushed by this recent people — a people who are but still, as it were, in the gristle, and not yet hardened into the bone of manhood.”

These men were the gristle ; many of them had borne arms in the war of liberty, and all had been accustomed to struggle with difficulties and conquer them.

Let us now speak of the accommodations of our novel vessel. When it was loaded, a space was left in the stern the length of a board, and running back to the place left, for working the helm, and of sufficient width and depth. Within this space was built the cabin, of rough boards, with a raised floor, in order that the water which came aboard might run under it, and go down through, into the sea. The roof was made of boards, and shingled, and was lighted by windows with sliding shutters, to prevent the sea from breaking them in bad weather. The berths were built against the sides in the after end ; those farthest aft belonging to the captain and mate, the others to the crew. They all

ate at the same table, though at different times, just as though they were in each other's houses at home.

The place was lighted in the night by a great tin lamp with a large, flat wick, and fed with fish oil. There was lampblack enough on the roof above where it hung to have painted Charlie's boat inside and out.

In the middle was a long, cross-legged table, which Uncle Isaac had made after the fashion of Ben's kitchen table on Elm Island. As the cabin was more than twenty feet in length, the spare room in the forward end was taken up with bread, beef, and such articles as it was important to keep dry.

Just aft of the foremast was the galley — a house built in much the same way, only smaller, with two slide doors abreast of each other, the roof flat, and covered with canvas. In the middle of this was built a fireplace of brick (stoves were not in use then), with a crane and pot-hooks; the chimney above was made of boards. In front of the fire was a bench, and on the starboard side, the cook's berth; on the other, shelves where he kept his pots, pans, mortar to pound coffee, and other matters.

This was Flour's empire, where he cooked, ate,

and slept. Just outside the door was his slush barrel. All the fat, skimmings, and other grease, which is not wanted to slush masts, and for other uses, is the cook's perquisite, which he sells at the end of the voyage. The only thing that looked much like any other craft was the long boat in her chocks, which Captain Rhines had bought in Wiscasset, to save themselves with in case of disaster. There was also a log canoe to serve common purposes.

This fashion of getting along, which would not have done at all with a common crew, worked like a charm on board the Ark, since it was just our folks going to market; and where all were interested, there were none disposed to take undue advantage of such treatment.

Captain Rhines, who had been all his life at sea with large crews, was a strict disciplinarian; but, with the noble spirit and excellent judgment for which he was distinguished, he laid all such notions aside, and enjoyed himself like a father among his children; yet the commands of the Great Mogul were never obeyed more promptly and implicitly than the least intimation of the captain by that crew.

Never did a ship's company live as they did;

for, in addition to the ventures of fowls, butter, cheese, apples, and what not, each one had brought little niceties from home, and they had in the "black" a glorious cook to prepare those things.

Uncle Isaac had given them a pig and a barrel of cider, and Joe Griffin's father a fat sheep. Captain Rhines was calculating to kill the pig and have a sea pie the day they made the land. Many a smother was made, and many a chicken roasted, in that galley: such high living made grease plenty, and Flour contemplated with great satisfaction the rapid increase of his slush barrel.

Just as Captain Rhines came on deck, a flying fish, driven by the gale, struck Flour's hat, and fell on deck. The captain, picking it up, said, "I'll put that in the pork barrel, and catch a dolphin with it, some day. The next morning, two or three more were picked up on deck, one of which Joe put in a bottle of spirit to take home to Charlie. These fish can only fly as long as their wings, or rather fins, are wet; and, in trying to fly over a vessel, they are either blown against the rigging and stunned, or else their wings get dry, and they fall on deck. They fly to escape the dolphin, which pursues and feeds on them. Just after sunrise the gale broke, and by night it was nearly calm, with

a great swell, in which the Ark, with no wind to steady her, rolled heavily. It was very hard work, indeed, for Joe Griffin to keep still and repress his love of mischief, especially as they lived well, and had very little to do; his fingers itched, and his heart ached, to be doing something; but he stood in much awe of Captain Rhines.

At length he could contain himself no longer. A seaman will sleep with men tramping, blocks creaking, sails slatting, and even cannon firing, over his head, so long as they are the ordinary noises of the ship, while the least unaccustomed sound will keep him awake. Taking advantage of this fact, when Joe went below at eight o'clock (we won't say bells, because the Ark had none), he turned his chest, which sat on the floor beside his berth, round, placing the keyhole next the berth, so that, while lying there, he could reach and lift the cover; he then took everything out of the till. When all was still, except the usual noises on shipboard, he put a large bullet in the till; the constant heavy rolls and lurches of the Ark set the bullet rolling.

"What's that?" cried Captain Rhines.

No answer; for Seth Warren and the boy were sound asleep, and Joe pretended to be.

"Isaac!"

"Ay, ay, sir!"

"What's that noise?"

"Noise, sir?"

"Yes, something rolling about. Look in the pantry, and see if some of the dishes, or something, ain't fetched away, and stuff some canvas round them."

When Isaac had performed the duty, the captain said, —

"That's what it was; I don't hear it now."

There was a very good reason why he did not, for Joe had taken the bullet out; he now put it back.

"There it goes again! On deck there!" shouted the captain.

"Ay, ay, sir!"

"Mr. Strout, I wish you would look round and see if there's anything rolling about, or anything on top of the house. We can't sleep. Perhaps there's a belaying pin under foot."

"There's nothing here, sir."

Still the noise continued.

"It's in the cabin, and I'll know what it is!" cried the captain, jumping out of his berth. In an instant Joe took out the bullet.

Taking down the lamp, he made a thorough search, but found nothing that could, by any possibility, make a noise. At length he found a potato on the floor.

"I can't find anything but a potato. I shouldn't think that was hard enough to make so much noise;" and he turned in. After a while, he said, —

"I guess it must have been the potato, Joe, for I don't hear it now," and went to sleep.

There was no more disturbance during the watch, as Joe did not dare to carry the joke any farther; for, though the captain was very fond of practical jokes, Joe well knew he did not like to have them perpetrated at his own expense, especially as he had been deprived of his usual amount of sleep during the gale.

CHAPTER II.

ISAAC MAKING THE MOST OF HIMSELF.

WHEN Captain Rhines and his wife went from Uncle Isaac's, on the evening to which we have referred in the previous chapter, he said to his friend, —

“Tell your nephew to come over to our house in the morning before he goes home.”

Captain Rhines found he had an excellent knowledge of arithmetic, and was very quick in figures, having always been at school winters. Indeed, he had spent several winters at his uncle's, taking care of his cattle, and cutting the wood, for his board, while his uncle was logging or doing some joiner or mill work. The captain then gave him the necessary books, and, after showing him how to commence, said, —

“Isaac, it may be some time before the Ark goes, as I shall not weigh anchor without it looks like a first-rate chance to run us clear from the coast. Take these books home, and go to work. Every

Saturday come over here, and I'll look over your week's work, correct it, and give you further instruction; thus you will get a good start before we go to sea. There the time will be broken, and there will be other things I shall want you to learn."

Thus the boy had about four weeks uninterrupted study before the vessel sailed.

On board of sea-going vessels there is always work enough — splicing ropes that part, blackleading blocks, preventing chafes, painting, tarring down rigging, mending sails, setting up rigging, making and taking in sail, to keep the men busy during their watch on deck in good weather; but in the Ark there was little or nothing of this kind to do.

It was Isaac's duty, as boy, to feed and water the fowl and cattle, give the hens gravel, make the beds in the cabin, and keep it clean, take his trick at the wheel in good weather. This took up but a small portion of his time; and, when his work was done, he studied in the daytime during his watch below. He also contrived to get the greater portion of the time to himself.

It was the custom in those days on board all vessels to give the men grog at dinner, and, when

they reefed sails in bad weather, an extra allowance. Isaac gave his to the cook, who, in return, did all his work in the cabin, permitting him to study.

Joe Griffin, also, who always liked to be about cattle, would often take care of the stock for him; besides, Captain Rhines would often send him below to study, when there was nothing to do, even in his watch on deck.

He also kept the vessel's way; and every day, when it was clear weather, and Captain Rhines took the sun, Isaac stood by him, and at length was allowed to take an observation himself. Thus he learned navigation thoroughly and practically. But Isaac had another instructor in the person of Flour, the cook.

He was a most accomplished seaman in all the minutiae of sailor craft. The reason he went cook was, he got more wages, and stood no watch, being called only in bad weather, and not even then on board the Ark, except in an extreme case to steer.

Isaac had now mastered navigation so thoroughly that he began to attend to other matters connected with his profession. The progress of invention has wrought a vast change in the fitting and

navigating of ships. There is not more difference between the plough of olden time and one of Ames's patents, than between the vessels with which our fathers ploughed the ocean, and a first-class ship of the present day. Iron has, to a vast extent, superseded rope in the fitting out of vessels. This has largely done away with that vast number of knots of curious, intricate structure, — mats, sennit, coach whip, grafting, hitching, and the like, upon which seamen of the olden time prided themselves, but, at the period of which we speak, these matters were all considered essential, and, indeed, were so.

Every afternoon, as soon as the cook had washed his dinner dishes, you would see Isaac, sitting by the galley, with a piece of nine thread, ratline, or some larger rope, learning to make single and double walls, Matthew Walker's diamond knot, Turks' heads, and all the hitches in common use. At another time, he would be at work with rope yarns making nettles for grafting, round sennit, and plaiting gasket, going to Flour for instruction whenever he was puzzled, or passing his work to him for inspection and approval. When Flour was busy he went to Captain Rhines or the mate. He also learned to sew with a sailor's thimble, which

is called a palm, because it is put in the palm of the hand.

There was considerable old junk — some pieces of rope, foot-ropes, and Flemish horses — which came from the yards of the ship whose mast came ashore at Elm Island; also many blocks that were not used in the rigging of the Ark. These things were all on board, and afforded plenty of material for Isaac to work upon.

Thus he learned how to strap blocks and pass seizings with an old piece of shroud that was on board, with which the captain taught him to turn in a dead eye; in short, he learned all that could be learned without square sails and yards to work upon.

The cook was mightily pleased with his pupil's proficiency, and expressed his approbation in very enthusiastic terms. One day he said to him, —

“What for you no get Joe Griffin to make you needle-case to keep your sail needles in? not keep 'em stuck in a rag; that's no ship-shape; no sailor man do dat; den I show you how to hitch it.”

“Well, I will,” replied Isaac, and ran away to ask Joe.

Joe, taking a piece of soft pine, bored a hole in it three fourths of an inch in diameter, and four

in depth; in another piece, he made a hole an inch in diameter, and the same in depth; then made them both round, whittled them down to the same size, and rounded the ends, cutting a shoulder on the largest piece, in which the small hole was bored, so that the other one would shut over it like the cover of a box.

Isaac now took the longest part, and put two turns of twine around the end at the edge of the shoulder, drew it tight, and fastened it; then running his needle between this band and the wood, he passed the twine through its own bite, making thus a half hitch (as sailors call it), or loop; this he repeated till he went round the case, placing his hitches as nearly as possible at equal distances from each other. When he had completed the circle, he went round again, putting his needle through the loops he had made before, and bringing one hitch over the other: this covered the wood, and ribbed the work, where the knots came, in spiral lines, which prevented the case from splitting, and looked very neat.

Flour now set him to making a pair of beackets, or rope handles, for his chest, which was a good deal of work, and very neat work, too, as they were to be laid up from a single strand of rope, and

grafted. This consists in taking many pieces of small line, placing them on the rope side by side, and close together, till they cover it, when they are fastened; half of them are now laid back, and a piece of strong twine passed around over the pieces of line that are left; this is the warp; then the upper pieces are brought down over the twine, and the others carried back, and the twine put over again. It is simply weaving by hand, and looks very neat when well done, as the warp is so small it don't show. Sailors call these pieces of small line, nettles, and twist them from rope yarn; but Joe gave Isaac some small fishing line, which looked much neater.

The next thing he made was a clothes-bag, which had a great deal of fancy work about the mouth of it; he also learned to make splices, and even a a thrum mat. When Isaac had completed the needle-case, beackets, and clothes-bag, to Flour's satisfaction (for he had to undo his work many times to satisfy the black's critical eye), his instructor was in high glee, and expressed himself in no measured terms.

"Who eber seed a green hand afore with needle-case, fancy clothes-bag, grafted beackets, all made by hisself? When you go in big ship, what ole

sailors tink see boy make dimon' knot, thrum mat, pint rope, take de work right out dar hands? O, was we only in square-rigged vessel, me show you ebery ting; den you jes like one monkey furl royal, reeve studdin'-sail gear, learn pass earing! When you go board big ship, mate open his eyes; he no set dat boy sweeping decks and slushing topmasts, — t'udder boy be slushing topmasts, — tarring down riggin', tarrin' parcellin', passin' ball for ole sailor, pickin' oakum, scrapin'; my gintlemun, he set on de fore-hatch makin' bunt-gasket. Kye, massa, kye!" In the exuberance of his feelings he began to sing, —

“ ‘Born in de frying-pan,
Raised on de shobel.
Tiddy-iddy, ah, tiddy-iddy.’ ”

“Now, boy, go right 'long dis minute, show 'em all to Massa Rhines; he judge of work; he know what nice job is. Cause why, he sailor man from de crown of his head to de sole of his foot.

“Den you get some salt out of de beef barrel, and wash him for me. I want to dry him, and pound for relish de chicken. Den you go study you book.”

Isaac took the salt, and, drawing a bucket of salt water, put in the salt, stirring it round with his

hand; he let it stand a few moments; but when he drained the water off, there were not two spoonfuls of salt, only some pieces of meat and bits of bone.

In amazement he took the bucket to the cook. "Look here, Flour; what has become of the salt? I put three quarts into this bucket, and washed it; now there isn't two spoonfuls."

"What water you wash him in, — salt or fresh, — hey?"

"Salt."

"Ho, ho! hee, hee!" shouted Flour, with that peculiar noise, — a combination of laugh, yell, and sneeze, which no beings except a full-blooded negro can utter, — and in respect to which Joe Griffin (who could imitate any other sound, human or animal) said, —

"You might as well try to put the fuzz on a carrot seed as to mimic it."

"Now, dis nigger show de white boy someting. You read, you write, you take de sun, so grand you big scholar, dunno put salt in salt water, he run'd way. You call de watch; he no answer; ay, ay, sir; he no dar. Go 'long, you white boy; you no know much; go study book."

Isaac did not know that there was a chemical affinity between the salt and substances held in solution in the sea water; but the black had learned it by practice, and was in no small degree elated by reason of his superior knowledge.

CHAPTER III.

ISAAC'S AMUSEMENTS.

Boys must have some amusement; and, in any vessel, they will be sky-larking, and extract pleasure from something, even when they are harshly treated by officers, and kicked and cuffed by old sailors, as they often are. But in the Ark Isaac was not only happy from being kindly treated, and from the consciousness that he was every day fitting himself for usefulness and promotion, but he had plenty of downright fun.

In the dog-watch he was sky-larking with Joe, who was his instructor in wrestling, as Flour in seamanship, and the captain in navigation.

"Isaac," said the captain, "if I were you I would not hang round Joe quite so much."

"Why not?" inquired the boy, surprised.

"Because he will play you some trick or other one of these days. I don't see how he has kept quiet so long."

"O, sir, he likes me. Besides, I don't believe he could play a trick on me very easily."

"He never loved anybody yet too well, to play a trick on them, and if you get to the windward of Joe Griffin you'll have to get up very early in the morning."

As though to verify the captain's words, while he was talking with Isaac on deck, Joe was cutting a hole with his jack-knife in the bottom boards of Seth Warren's berth, that was directly over his own.

Admiral Cologne, though one of the bravest men in the world, was so much afraid of a mouse, that he would not sit in a room with one without a drawn sword in his hand. Peter the Great was afraid of a beetle, and the Marquis De La Roche Jacqueline could not look a squirrel in the face without trembling, though renowned for courage.

Seth Warren, a strong man, and fearless in all other respects, had a mortal dread of a rat; he would as soon have been shut up in a room with a lion as a rat. This Joe well knew, and took his measures accordingly.

That night the starboard watch had the middle watch from twelve to four. When all the rest were sound asleep, about two o'clock, Joe ran a little sharp-pointed stick up through the hole he had made in the tick of Seth's bed, into the straw, and

began to stir him up. As soon as he perceived by Seth's uneasy movements that he was half awake, he put his mouth to the hole, and began to squeal like rats, with variations.

You would have thought a dozen rats were fighting in the straw bed right under Seth's back. With a wild yell of anguish, in the utmost horror, he sprang from his berth into the cabin floor. Roused from a sound slumber by the cry, the others followed suit, and the watch on deck came running below.

There was Seth, crouching on the floor, his eyes starting from their sockets, and bathed in perspiration.

"What is the matter, Seth?" asked the captain.
"What ails you?"

"There's rats in my berth!"

"Rats! There's not a rat nearer to you than Cuba. I reckon that's the nearest land to us now, except the Bahamas."

"There is, sir; I know there is; I'm jest as sure of it as I am I'm alive."

"Did you see 'em?"

"No, sir, but I felt them running about in the straw right under me, and I heard them squealing; you might have heard them all over the vessel."

"He was dreaming, sir," said Joe; "he's so scared of rats he dreams about 'em."

"He didn't dream the squealing," said the mate, "for I heard it myself on deck."

"I won't get into that berth again," said Seth. "I'll lash myself to the masthead, and sleep there first."

"You might as well try to make me believe the moon is made of green cheese, as that there are rats in this vessel," said the captain. "You had the nightmare, and dreamt it."

"No, I didn't dream it; it's not in the power of man to make me believe that; the mate says he heard it on deck."

"Let's have a look," said the captain; and, taking down the lamp, he gave it to Isaac to hold, while he removed the blankets. At length he took out the bed, and espied the hole and stick.

"You was right, Seth; there was a rat; I've found the hole, but he gnawed up from Joe's berth. Ah, Joe! I'll give you lumber enough to drag in Havana to take some of the mischief out of you. I'll have you out before day towing rafts of lumber."

"I'm real sorry, Seth," said Joe; "but it came into my head, and I couldn't help it. If you'll

think no more about it, I'll give you that handsome powder-horn of mine; it's so clear you can see the powder right through it."

Isaac now perceived the object of the captain's caution in respect to Joe, and, fearing his own turn might come at any time, was ever on the watch.

We have in previous volumes alluded to the captain's extravagant fondness for shooting, and, indeed, sporting of all kinds. That he might be in readiness for whatever should turn up, he had brought with him two guns, two harpoons, a pair of grains (a harpoon with five barbed points, made for striking smaller-sized fish). He put up some wooden crotches in the galley, on which he hung the guns and powder-horns, as being the dryest place in the ship.

Isaac was allowed to use the lines and the guns whenever he pleased, which, you may be assured, was quite often.

He caught rudder fish over the stern. These are small fish that keep on top of the water, close to the rudder, and, though not more than three inches in length, no matter how fast the ship goes, they will keep along with her. They are probably attracted by the slime that collects on the rudder, and perhaps by small shells or insects not visible to

the naked eye. They are brown on the back, with spots of dusky yellow; the belly a yellowish white, with red at the extremity of the tail.

It was a pleasant forenoon, the wind quartering. Coming on deck at twelve o'clock, the captain said, —

“Ike, go up on the fore-crosstrees and see if you can smell any oranges.” By his reckoning he was well up with Abaco, and desirous to make it. Isaac did as he was ordered, looking and smelling with all his might, but in vain, till he was called down.

In a short time he was sent up again; soon the cry was heard, —

“Land, ho!”

“Where away?”

“Right ahead, sir.”

“What does it look like?”

“Hills, sir.”

“When you see it plain, sing out.”

By and by the boy said, —

“I see a long, high point, and there's a hole in it. I can look right through it.”

“That will do; come down.”

This was the land Captain Rhines desired to make. It was the south-east point of Abaco, one of the Bahamas. Through this point is a hole

from water to water, through which the sea breaks, called the Hole in the Wall, and a noted landmark for all vessels bound into any of the Gulf ports.

It was customary, in those days, when there were no lights on any of these islands, after making the Hole in the Wall, to run during the day, and lie by nights; but, as the wind was fair, and the night clear, Captain Rhines, who knew the road, took his departure at sunset, and shaped his course for the Berry Islands. The next morning, the captain, after looking over Isaac's reckoning, began to point out to him on the chart the course over the Banks.

The chart was not much like those of the present day,—mathematically accurate as to soundings, distances, and rocks,—for it was made long before the Revolution, and by no means accurate in itself considered; but Captain Rhines, and those from whom he had received it, had made it so; for it had passed through many hands. It was written all over with corrections, both of soundings and courses, and on the back of it was one he had made himself.

While they were thus engaged, the mate, coming to the gangway, called out,—

“Land to leeward, sir!”

This proved to be Stirrup Key, one of the Berry Islands. The water now changed from the deep blue of the ocean to a milky white. They were on the edge of the Great Bahama Bank, and, heaving the lead, found seventeen fathoms. The Great Bahama is a most singular spot, being a vast sand bank more than three hundred miles in length, and eighty in breadth, rising up almost perpendicularly from the deep water of the ocean, and directly in the track of vessels bound from the United States to Cuba.

This great marine plain is diversified with islands (keys, as they are called when small) of all shapes and sizes, abounding in turtle and fish, most of them affording wood and water. The edges, and many other parts, are full of dangerous reefs; the bottom is sand and minute shells, and in some parts are sponges and fan coral, with larger and beautiful shells. The depth of water over a great portion of it is only from two to four fathoms, and vessels drawing more than thirteen feet of water cannot cross the Bank, but must go around to the westward of it. There are not many fish on the Bank, as there seems to be nothing for them to feed on, and, probably, too great exposure to the sun and light; but around the keys, and on the edge, in the deep water, they are plenty.

Across this Bank is a regular and well understood course, with barely water enough for vessels of moderate draft, and with dangerous shoals and rocks on each side, by which hundreds and thousands of vessels find their way to Cuba and the Gulf ports.

A great proportion of the forests of New England, in the shape of spars, boxes, shingles, and staves, have been carried by this road to Cuba, and from thence to all parts of the world. The object in crossing this Bank is to avoid the current of the Gulf Stream, which runs between it and Cuba at the rate of four or five miles an hour, and also to make a more direct course. Thousands of red-cheeked New England boys, in the flush of youth and health, with the most sanguine expectations of the future, have threaded these keys, and escaped their meshes, only to lay their bones in Havana — whole crews at some seasons dying like sheep in the pestilential climate. They were now on the edge of the Bank, shaping their course for Orange Keys, on its western side.

"Isaac," said Captain Rhines, "it's time now that we were among the fish. After you finish your lesson, fling a line over; perhaps you'll catch a bonita, a 'baracooter,' or a dolphin. I must finish some writing."

Isaac tended the line for a while very carefully, making the end fast, and leaving a good bit of spare line to play the fish with, if it should chance to be a large one.

But the sun was hot; the boy felt listless with the change of climate, and, occupied in watching the bonitas chasing flying-fish, permitted the line gradually to slip through his hands till there was not much slack left. In an instant, snap went the line, whizzing through his hands, and well nigh pulling him overboard. At the same time a great fish leaped ten feet in the air, and fell on the water with a splash, stirring it to a foam with his tail.

Isaac was no novice in fishing, and knew very well, if the slack ran through his hands till the line brought up at last with a jerk, it would part in a moment. He locked both legs around the mainsheet, held on with all his might (while the struggles of the fish were gradually drawing the lines through his hands), and screamed,—

“Captain Rhines, come quick! I’ve got a shark! He’ll part the line! I can’t hold him!”

The captain ran on deck, and, casting off the end of the line, bent a piece of small rope to it, letting the fish run till he became quiet, when he began to haul in. By and by the fish renewed

his struggles, leaping out of the water, and then plunging down into the depths below. At these periods the captain, who, by hauling in when the fish was tired and quiet, had abundance of slack line, let him run. He now relinquished the line to Isaac, who, by keeping the fish's mouth open, finally drowned him, and hauled him alongside, belly up and dead.

"It's a baracoota" (baracuda), said the captain, "and a whopper he is, too."

The baracuda was ten feet long, brown on the back, with a white belly; the mouth was very large, the eyes prominent, and the under jaw longer than the upper one. In the mouth were large, tearing teeth, like those of a dog, and a single large one in the forward part of the under jaw. The captain told Isaac that they would when hungry attack a man, and often bit the coral divers and people who were at work in the water getting sponge.

Slipping a running bowline over him, they hauled him on board. They are very good eating, and Flour lost no time in cutting slices to fry for dinner. In the course of the afternoon, Isaac shot a frigate bird and two gulls; and, baiting a hook with one of the flying-fish the captain had in pic-

kle, caught a bonita. This was a beautiful fish, about two and a half feet long, resembling a mackerel; the back and sides were a bright blue, with shades of green and pink; the belly a silver white; four brown stripes on each side extended from the head to the tail. The captain kept his harpoons and grains rigged and in constant readiness, and gave Isaac orders to call him, whether he was awake or asleep, if a porpoise came alongside.

The captain dearly loved to strike a porpoise — indeed, it is very exciting sport; they are very strong, and will sometimes bend a harpoon double, or tear it out of their flesh; besides, they show themselves but a moment above water, and it requires no little skill to hit them.

Isaac longed to strike a porpoise, but the captain liked the sport too well himself to afford him an opportunity, and also feared he might fall overboard.

As boys are sure to be the most eager to do that which they are forbidden, his desire was set on edge by the prohibition. To get rid of his importunities, and by way of compromise, the captain permitted him to use the grains, which are lighter than a harpoon, and used for striking smaller fish.

Isaac had heard a great deal said about the dol-

phin, and was very anxious to catch one, that he might witness the change of hues he had so frequently heard spoken of when they were dying. Both the captain and himself had tried to catch one by baiting with flying-fish; but they used all their bait, and caught only bonitas.

Meanwhile he practised with the grains by flinging a log of wood into the water, and striking it; he also practised with the harpoon in the same way, till he was fully persuaded in his own mind that he could kill a porpoise if the captain would only let him try.

One pleasant morning, when Captain Rhines was asleep below, and Seth Warren had charge, they came across a very large cedar, that had been torn from the bank either by the winds or waves, but probably undermined by the latter, as the whole mass of roots and the limbs were attached to it, and spread out upon the surface of the water. It was completely incrustated with limpets, barnacles, sea-slugs, snails, star-fish, and a shell-fish resembling a clam, but much smaller, that attaches itself to floating bodies. It has a very white, thin shell, that is easily bitten through by a fish, while they are not too large to admit of being swallowed entire.

The old tree presented a most singular spectacle. Its freight of animal life attracted myriads of rudder and flying-fish, while they, in their turn, attracted the larger fish that feed on them. In the twisted meshes of its roots were groups of these fish huddled together, and playing hide and seek with the dolphins, who were swimming around outside, endeavoring to thrust their noses between the network of roots, and beneath the long fringes of seaweed that, attached to the roots, and falling down in heavy masses over their recesses, still more completely sheltered their victims.

Had they been porpoises, Isaac would have gone to the gangway and shouted, Porpoise, porpoise! but as the captain had never said anything in respect to other fish, he determined to have all the fun to himself. Catching up the grains, he flung them at a dolphin, who, with nose stuck in between the roots of the tree, and his body half out of water, was trying to get hold of a rudder-fish, and had him on board in a moment. But they were gradually passing the tree, and the idea of losing such sport the moment it began, made the boy perfectly wild.

“O, Mr. Warren!” he cried, “stop her! do stop her!”

"Who ever heard of a vessel with a fair wind heaving to, to catch dolphins?" he replied.

"But I'll stop the tree," said Joe, who was no less interested than Isaac, for he was a born hunter, and as keenly alive to any kind of sport, by land or water, as an Indian. As he spoke he drove the harpoon into the body of the tree, and brought it alongside. He then made a rope fast to one of the roots, and, taking a small spar, ran it over the bow, lashing it to the rail and windlass bits; to the end of this he made fast the tow-line, which drew the old tree along with its living freight, a little aft of the fore-chains, and at a distance of ten feet from the vessel.

While he was making the rope fast, the large fish struck off; but they soon returned, when the arrangements were completed, and all was quiet again.

The Ark, being open except at the bow and stern, full of crevices between the edges of the boards, which afforded a lodgment for marine animals and vegetation, furnished food for fish; and thus the water between the Ark and the tree was filled and plashing with dolphin, some nosing around the roots and limbs of the cedar, others rubbing alongside of the vessel, and eating the marine substances there.

The temptation was so great that the dolphin (who are generally shy, and disappear the moment one of their number is struck or caught) only retreated to the other side of the cedar at every throw of the grains, returning as soon as the stain of blood on the water had disappeared in the vessel's wake.

Isaac had already secured three dolphins, when, just as they were lifting the fourth from the water, a baracuda bit it in halves, leaving the head and shoulders hanging to the iron. In an instant, the harpoon, flung by the strong arm of Joe, went crashing through him; and, with his prey in his mouth, he also was added to the roll of captives. Not a dolphin was to be seen after the baracuda appeared; fleeing from their dreaded foe, they vanished in a moment.

Isaac, dropping the grains, seized the harpoon, rejoicing in the opportunity to use it.

The baracudas, meeting with so warm a reception, and missing their prey, now began in their turn to depart.

At length Captain Rhines was roused by the flapping of the fish, and the shouts of Isaac, who cried out,—

“O, Joe! O, Mr. Warren! I've sent the iron

clear through this fellow! Ain't he a bouncer? How much do you suppose he weighs? See him bleed! O, Flour! *do* come here just *one minute!*"

"I can't, boy; I must see to Massa Cap'n's dinner. You boy nuffin do but skylark. I got something else to do."

"O, *do come* just one minute! You see that big fellow with his fin out. Well, just see how I'll pin him."

Captain Rhines came on deck just in time to catch up the grains and strike a fish, that, loath to leave the prey, lingered behind his fellows.

Some days before these events Isaac had made a large coop, put in some hay for nests, and transferred some of the hens from the other coops, where they were crowded, to this. He now fed them on fish in addition to their grain, and once in a while obtained an egg.

Captain Rhines now ordered the lead to be thrown, and put Isaac in the channels with Sam Edwards, in order that Sam might teach him to throw it, and give off the marks properly. The channels are pieces of plank bolted to the outside of the vessel edgewise, which make a convenient place to stand while heaving the lead. Captain Rhines, according to the custom of that day, had

the lead thrown nearly all the way across the Banks, the watch taking turns; thus Isaac had plenty of practice. The rest of the crew had crossed the Banks many times, and, with them, it had ceased to be a novelty; but to Isaac it was a new world, — a strange scene, indeed, — no land in sight; all broad ocean; and yet all around he could look down and see the white bottom glaring in the sun, till the eye was dazzled. The water, when calm, was so clear that you could see the least thing on the bottom, which appeared almost to touch the keel. Indeed, vessels that are a little too deep laden do often scrub along the bottom, sometimes sticking fast, and are compelled to lie till the tide makes, or a strong breeze comes, to force them over the shoal.

All hands went in swimming except Isaac, who had never learned how. There are not many sharks in the middle of the Bank, although abundant at the edges; besides, the water is so clear that you can see them; and they had two to keep watch for John Shark while the rest bathed. The boy was not long in finding out that on the bottom were clumps of fan coral and sponges. He instantly resorted to all manner of expedients to obtain them, — made nooses, sunk bights of rope on the bottom,

and dragged them along, fastened hooks to ropes and poles, but without obtaining any. He might, perhaps, have succeeded, but a breeze springing up caused the vessel to go too fast, and disturbed the water, that he could not see them.

Captain Rhines had constructed what he called his pump well. This was a box, only about two inches square, made by nailing three strips of board on to the mainmast, and running to the keel, the mast forming one side of the box. A spruce pole, shaved smooth and white, ran down in this box to the keel; it was divided into feet, and marked, by pulling up the pole and noticing what portion of it was wet. He could tell how deep the Ark was in the water, and how much she settled, by the soaking of the lumber, as he had marked her draught when she was first loaded.

"Look here, Mr. Strout," said he, holding the rod, which he had pulled up in his hand; "there's what she drew when we finished loading at Elm Island. There's what she settled up to the time we took that gale in the Gulf, which is only a few inches; and since that she has gone down nearly two feet. There never could be all that difference in so short a time by soaking. Either the air chest on the keelson, or some of the hogsheads, must have sprung a leak;

but we can't help ourselves, and must make the best of it."

This was quite a serious matter, as it exposed the Ark to being boarded by the sea in the event of a gale, diminished her buoyancy, made her like a raft on the water, and hindered her sailing.

"This was done," he continued, "by knocking about in that gale; the working of the lumber has taken the hoops off some of these casks, and let the water into them."

He was evidently somewhat troubled by the discovery, and, after pacing the deck a while, and chewing a great deal of tobacco, took a marline-spike, and, going below into the forward part of the cabin, where the spare rigging was stowed, spent the greater part of the day there busily at work upon something. He also ordered a spare spar, that he had taken on board at Elm Island, and that was under the cattle stalls, to be got out. He told Joe to flatten one side of it with his broadaxe, and treenail a wide plank by one edge to the flat side. He then had it lashed forward of the foremast, where it could be readily got at.

"What do you suppose the old man is going to do with that, Seth?" asked Joe.

"I'm sure I don't know. I suppose he does;

perhaps it's something he wants to make use of in Havana."

The wind, which had up to this time been fair, and for the most part sufficient, now died away, as the day broke, to a flat calm, when they found themselves within a mile and a half of Orange Keys, and came to an anchor.

CHAPTER IV.

ORANGE KEYS.

THE Orange Keys are a collection of barren rocks and sand shoals on the western edge of the Great Bahama Bank, which, at a little distance from them, drops off into a fathomless channel. The proximity to deep water causes it to abound in fish of many kinds; and, like all these islands, it is, in the spring and summer months, the resort of turtles, which, at that period of the year, approach the shores to deposit their eggs; while they live in deep water through the other parts of the year.

The main rock is three fourths of a mile in length, and more than three hundred feet in breadth, surrounded by other rocks, which rise perpendicularly from the water, and are connected with it by reefs running beneath the surface.

No sooner was the anchor down than Flour said to Isaac, —

“Now, boy, if you want coral, ask Massa Cap’n to let you take the boat, and go to dat key.”

He lost no time in acting upon the suggestion, when Captain Rhines said he would go himself, and any of the crew might go who liked.

The mate and Yelf were all who cared enough about it to pull a mile and a half; but Joe, to please Isaac, made something to fish up the coral with. Having provided themselves with fishing-lines, ropes, and other materials, which were necessary, they set out.

They landed Captain Rhines on the large rock, from which he designed to fish, while the others went on to the reefs near by to search for coral and sponge. These rocks, being much of the nature of limestone, and soft, are so abraded by the action of the waves as to be worn away underneath, leaving their upper portions jutting over, which renders them convenient to fish from.

They brought with them a boat's anchor, from which the stock had been removed, and the machine made by Joe. This consisted in fastening six tough pieces of white oak, eighteen inches long, two inches wide, and an inch thick, to a long pole. The lower ends were made sharp, and a barbed shoulder cut on the inside of each one. As they were nearly four inches wide across the shoulder, they spread out at that end like a fan.

They dragged the anchor along the bottom, and with it tore the coral from the rocks; and then, pushing down the wooden fingers, sprung them over it, when it was held by the spring of the tough wood and the shoulder, just as the prongs of an eel-spear hold an eel.

Isaac was very much surprised when the first piece of coral came up, it being covered with yellow slime, smelt most disagreeably, and was, in some degree, soft and flexible. The mate told him not to handle it more than was needful, as the slime would make his hands sore; that, after being washed and bleached in the sun, it would harden and lose its offensive smell. Coral is the work of a small zoöphyte, which perishes as its work goes on; and, being succeeded by others, it is, therefore, composed to a greater or less extent, when first obtained, of living animal matter. As the anchor was a rough instrument, and broke the coral more or less, when they found a very beautiful piece, and wished to obtain it entire, they put the bight of a rope around it, with the pole close to the bottom, then put in a stick and twisted it together, thus pulling it up.

The sponge they obtained by diving; and Yelf brought up one that had attached itself to a conch.

Some, of small size, were in such shoal water that they could wade to them.

"I never should think this was sponge," said Isaac, taking up a large one, and squeezing it, while the jelly, with which all the cells in it were filled, hung from his fingers. "I shouldn't want my mother to wash my face with this. How it smells!"

"You'd better let it alone," said Yelf; "it'll make your hands sore, and turn them as black as ink."

"But how can anybody ever get it fit to use, like the sponge we buy?"

That slime will dry up after a while, and turn to dust; then you can beat it out, and wash it, till it becomes white and clean. The people on these keys, that get their living by diving for coral, conchs, sponges, and catching turtle, take it and bury it up in the sand two days, then wash it and pound it with a flat stick on a rock, and let it dry in the sun, beating it at intervals, till it is fit to sell; and then the merchants that buy it have some way to whiten it.

While they were thus occupied, a stone struck the water near the boat. Looking up, they perceived it had been thrown by the captain, who was making signs for them to come to him. As

they approached the rock, he said, in a whisper,—

“There’s a big turtle asleep over to the westward of this rock. Did any of you ever catch a turtle in the water?”

“I have,” said the mate.

“Then get into the canoe with me. If I only had my little boy Ben here, he’d pick him up as though he was a bull-frog.”

When they were within a few yards of him, they took in their oars, and the captain said,—

“Will you turn him, John, or shall I?”

“You are a stronger man than I am, captain. I’ll paddle the canoe, and get hold of the starboard flapper the instant you turn him.”

The mate paddled the canoe noiselessly across the sleeping animal’s stern, whose hind flappers were spread out on the surface of the water, when the captain, seizing one in each hand, whirled him on his back; and the mate instantly seizing one of them, they jerked him into the boat in a moment. They were greeted with a round of cheers from the party on the rock, who had been most interested spectators of their movements.

“I think that turtle must be somewhat surprised,” said the mate; “for I don’t believe he waked till he was in the boat.”

"He's a green turtle, as I'm a sinner!" said the captain, "and weighs six hundred, if he weighs a pound. It is not often you see them round the keys this time of year, but I suppose he came out of the Gulf. Won't we have a good time eating him?" he continued, rubbing his hands with delight.

When they reached the rock, Isaac, who had never seen a sea turtle, viewed him with great curiosity. He sat on his back, and the turtle crawled along as though he was a feather.

"Will he bite?" he inquired.

"Bite!" was the reply; "they will dent a piece of iron."

While they sat resting and chatting on the rock, Isaac plied the captain with questions in respect to the nature and habits of turtles.

"What do they eat, sir?"

"The green ones eat a kind of grass that grows on the bottom; the other kinds feed on fish and shell fish, crabs, oysters, and conchs—they can grind up anything with their strong jaws. The loggerheads feed on any foul stuff, like a carrion crow. I think they eat coral when it is young and tender, for I've found pieces of it in them."

"Do they always sleep on the water?"

“Yes; they are very helpless creatures on the land, and they know it, and are very timid about coming to it, except when they are about to breed, then they are bold enough. They spend the winter in the deep water, where it is warm; but in April they begin to crawl out along the shores, to search for a good place to lay their eggs.”

“O, my! do they lay eggs? What kind of looking things are they?”

“Did you ever find any snake’s eggs under a rock?”

“Yes, sir.”

“They look like them, only more round; have a tough skin instead of a shell, and are two or three inches in diameter.”

“Do tell me some more. Please tell me all about them.”

“Well, some calm moonlight night in May or June, you sit down on the shores of these islands, as I often have in Matanzas, and keep perfectly still, and you’ll see the turtles poking their heads up out of the water as thick as frogs in a pond, looking and listening. If they hear any noise, down they go; but if all is still, they crawl up on the beach, out of the tide’s way, and dig a hole in the sand with their hind flappers. You’ve no idea,

how they'll make the sand fly. They'll dig a hole two feet deep in ten minutes. After they have made the hole, they begin to drop the eggs, putting them on top of the other as regular as you could pack them with your fingers. Then, when they have dropped a hundred or more, they cover them up in the sand for the sun to hatch, and leave them. In a month they dig another hole, and lay as many more. Some kinds breed later than others, so that they are round the shores all summer, either laying or getting ready to.

"When the young ones are about the size of a dollar, they dig out, and crawl into the water."

"What will they do if you go to them when they are laying?"

"Won't take the least notice of you, but keep right on. They can't stop after they begin. I've got on their backs, and sat there. It didn't make any difference. You may hold your hat under them, and they will lay in it. Why, if the fish didn't eat them when they are small, and men when they are large, and their eggs were not destroyed by thousands by men and animals, they would soon fill the ocean, they breed so fast."

"How do the folks that make a business of it get them?"

“They catch some asleep on the water, as we did this one; some they harpoon when they come up to breathe; but they get the most of them when they come on shore to breed. Two men will go along and turn over on their backs as many as they can find, — sometimes a hundred in a night, — and, after they are turned over, they are helpless. Then they pick them up, and put them in pens, where the tide flows in, and keep them till they sell them.”

“But where does the turtle shell come from that they make combs and snuff-boxes out of? This don’t look like it. What do they do to it to make it look so handsome?”

“That comes from another kind of turtle, called ‘hawksbill,’ because the bill is curved, like a hawk’s.”

“I wish we could get one of them. If I could, I’d get the shell, and have a comb made for mother and our Kate, and a snuff-box for grandfather and Uncle Isaac. But how do they get the shell off?”

“They kill them, and take the large, thick shell off first; then they make a fire under it; and, when it is warmed through, the outside, which is what they want, becomes loose, and cleaves away. The old classic account of the turtle is, ‘that he

once wore his bones inside of his skin, like other folks; but being invited, with all the other animals, to Jupiter's wedding, he was so much attached to his house as to be unwilling to leave it, being the only animal that refused to go; upon which the angry god said, if he was so fond of his house, he should never leave it; and he has carried it on his back ever since.' You must not forget, my boy, that Columbus threaded his way through these shoals with no chart, or knowledge derived from others; for he was the first who ever sailed these seas; and one of these islands was the first portion of the new world he discovered."

"O, Captain Rhines, how much you do know!"

"Indeed, Isaac," replied the captain, laughing, "I am an ignorant man; never had any privileges when I was young, as boys have nowadays. I never was in a school-house in my life, except to a meeting. We old sailors, who have been all our lifetime knocking about the world, seeing and hearing what is going on in all parts of it, must be very stupid not to pick up something; but I often feel mortified, when in company with larned people, because I can't tell what little I do know in a proper manner. It's a great thing, Isaac, for a boy that's growing up to have the privilege of going to

school that you have had, and your father shows his wisdom in sparing you to go as much as he has. But there's John Savage, my cousin ; his father sent him to school at Wiscasset, because our schools wan't good enough ; and this fall he's gone to Salem, and, though he speaks very properly, and uses big words, and wears nice clothes, there's nothing in the words, nor in him either. I've heard Uncle Isaac say that the money spent on his schooling was all thrown away ; that he was not capable of getting his living, and don't know enough to know when his feet are cold. You see, Isaac, the best workmen in this world couldn't make a handsome piece of work out of the shell of this turtle, because the material ain't there ; but give him the raal article, and he'll do it. He'll polish it, and bring out all the beautiful colors and nice shades there are in it, and shape it into handsome forms ; but he only brings them out ; it passes his power to put them there. It's just that way with education ; the raal article must be there ; the schoolmaster only brings it out and polishes it up. It's a great deal better to have sense without the polish, than the polish without the sense ; but it's better still to have both. If a man has the capacity and resolution, he can do a great deal for himself. When a

good, striving man, in a new country, can't get a mechanic to make his plough, he cuts down a tree, and makes it himself. Though rough, it answers the purpose, turns the furrow, and enables him to raise bread for his children. That's the way with your Uncle Isaac and myself; we did the best we could under the circumstances, and, perhaps, by so doing, we may be the means of enabling those who come after us to do better than we have.

"I have given Ben good larning, and he has always made a good use of it; and I mean to do the same by John. There's noble sprouts sometimes come from an old, ugly stump — a great deal better than the original tree."

"Will John go to sea?"

"Not if I can help it; for it's a dog's life. Not that I should prevent him, if his mind was bent upon it, because that would be just the way to kill his courage; but I hope he won't take that turn. When he found you was going to start, did he say anything about it?"

"No, sir."

"John's a good boy, and I've endeavored to do all I could for him. I know that children ought to love and honor their parents, because the 'good Book' says so, and it's right; but there is two sides

to it, as there is to most everything; and where parents don't take any pains to give children larning (if they are able), give them a trade, larn them to work and get a living in the world, and don't concern themselves any more about them than these turtles do about their eggs, after they cover them up in the sand, I can't help thinking the children's debt is very small."

"Then I'm sure I owe a heavy debt to my parents, for they will pinch themselves to benefit me; and I mean to do all I can to help them, though I know I never can pay it."

"That's right, my boy; do you all you can for your parents and yourself; pick up all you can everywhere, and remember it; keep good company, and do all you can to keep yourself up; don't let anybody go ahead of you, if you can help it. Ask for information. No reasonable person will find fault with you for asking proper questions at proper times."

"I have been afraid sometimes that I should ask you too many questions."

"Not a whit of it. You can see yourself that I didn't need you on board this craft any more than a spare pump. There's nothing to do till we come to discharge; but I knew you was a good, resolute

boy, for I remember the scrape you had with the skunk. I knew that you must be a boy of good principles, because John liked you (for I know that he can't like anybody that is not); I saw that you was dutiful to your parents, and tried to make the most of yourself, and I determined to help you."

"Indeed, Captain Rhines, I am very much obliged to you. I see already that I had much better have come with you for nothing, than gone anywhere else, and had high wages. I'm sure I don't know how I can repay you for all your kindness, and the pains you have taken with me."

"I'll tell you, my boy. When I first shipped aboard a square-rigged vessel, I was some older than you, could neither read nor write, and made my mark on the vessel's articles; but I did the best I could. I did my duty. The mate took notice of me, larned me to read and write, and taught me navigation, just as I am teaching you. When I left that vessel to become first officer of a ship, through his recommendation, I said to him, 'Mr. Brown, how can I ever repay you for all you've done for me?' He replied, 'Ben, I'm paid twice over in seeing the good progress you have made, and, if you still feel under obligations, do by other young men you may fall in with, and who are starting in the world, with

nobody to help them, as I have by you.' Thus, you see, I'm only doing as I was done by; and when you get up, as, no doubt, you will, you can repay me by helping your neighbor. If there was time I could tell you a great deal about coral that I have seen in the Pacific and other places. It grows much larger than this, into reefs that will cut through the plank of a ship like a knife. It is red, black, and gray, and grows into much handsomer shapes. But it is time we were on board; the wind may spring up with the flood tide."

Just after two o'clock the wind came, but scant, and the Ark, close-hauled, shaped her course for Salt Key Bank.

"Boy," said Flour, "that sponge, he smell bad. Put some water and ashes in de tub. Soak him, and de coral, too."

Isaac did as the cook directed, and found that the ley removed all the offensive smell.

CHAPTER V.

AN EXCITING INCIDENT.

THEY now began to see many schools of porpoises; and the captain, who had become satiated with striking them, told Isaac if he would be careful, and keep the end of the line fast, and be sure not to get tangled in it, he might try them, and need not call him.

Isaac practised night and day, getting Yelf to call him when they came along in the night. The porpoise leaves a luminous track in the water in the night, which renders it easy to see them.

He made a tail-block fast to the anchor-stock, and rove the warp through it, to haul the porpoise in with. The harpoon was ground to a sharp edge, and in constant readiness. He also made a sheath to cover the point and prevent its being dulled; but, notwithstanding these excellent and formidable preparations, and though he had darted the harpoon some hundreds of times, no porpoise was struck, except once in the while when the captain

or the mate (who was an old whaleman) took a fancy to a porpoise-steak, and struck one.

The boy found that fastening to a porpoise was quite another thing from striking a log of wood. The porpoise is five feet or more in length, and exceeding active and strong. They lift the nose out of the water, and breathe through an orifice in the top of the head, then plunge under again. This occupies so little time that one must be very quick to strike them. They are very fond of running directly across a vessel's bow, and, no matter how fast she goes, they will pass and repass, without ever permitting the vessel to strike them. A sea porpoise weighs four or five hundred ; and they are strong enough to bend a harpoon double. They suckle their young ones, producing two at a birth. Their flesh resembles beef, and over it is about an inch of blubber, which affords excellent oil. Their jaws are long, with forty or more sharp, curved teeth, which are sometimes used by sailors for combs. The Indians shoot them from their canoes, cut out the jaws, and hang them up in cool weather; and the oil, which drips from them then, will not congeal, and is used to oil clocks and watches.

"I will tell you what you must do, Isaac," said the captain; "you must 'forelay' for them, and

then you will hit them. When we want to shoot a bird flying, we aim just before their bills. These porpoises go almost as fast as a bird; aim a little ahead of them."

The next day a school came along. Isaac, determined to be guided by the captain's advice, stationed himself at the lee bow. After several abortive attempts, he at length struck one, and shouted for help to haul him in; but the iron pulling out of his flesh, he escaped, leaving a trail of blood on the water, and pursued by the rest, who, Joe said, would eat him. This partial success excited him to redoubled efforts. In about an hour another school came along, frolicking in the water, passing and repassing before the bows by scores.

Whenever Isaac was attempting to strike a porpoise, some one generally kept watch over him, as he was a universal pet, and they were apprehensive he might fall overboard. But at this time every one seemed to have lost sight of him. It was near noon, and Flour was busy getting dinner. He was making a chicken stew and an apple pudding (not a very common thing on shipboard); but, as they all fared alike, each one contributed of his venture when they occasionally wanted an extra dinner,

some of apples, others chickens, onions, or butter; and, as the captain had expressed a wish for some soft bread, he was also baking biscuit in the Dutch oven. Captain Rhines and the watch below were asleep. Joe was busily at work stuffing some oakum under a piece of canvas that he had nailed upon the side of a stall for the benefit of a horse, whose hip had been chafed by the pitching of the vessel, while the sails and the cattle-pen completely concealed the boy from the man at the helm. He singled out a very large porpoise, and flung the harpoon with such good will, and the vessel giving a lee lurch at the same moment, he went after it head foremost into the sea.

Uttering a scream of agony, he instinctively grasped the warp, and sunk beneath the surface. When he came up, the warp was taut, by reason of the vessel going in one direction, and the porpoise struggling to proceed in another. It was quite rough, and, being dragged through and against the sea, sometimes four or five feet under water, and then coming for an instant to the surface, unable to swim, and ignorant of the method of husbanding his resources in the water, he almost instantly lost all consciousness, but, with the instinct of a drowning man, still clung



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to the rope. The black heard the cry, sang out, "Hard down," and not dreaming of the boy's catching hold of the warp, and drifting under the counter, but expecting to see him somewhere to windward, and abreast of the vessel, flung over a board, and rushed to cut the lashings of the boat. He was instantly joined by Joe and Seth, who had put the helm in the lee becket, and brought the vessel to; but some precious moments had been lost, when Captain Rhines, who had come on deck at the alarm, cried, —

"Hold on! He's towing astern by the harpoon warp! Haul in on the line!"

They brought him alongside, while the captain was shouting to ears that could not hear, encouraging him to hold on.

It was with difficulty they unclined his fingers from the rope.

"He's dead, poor boy!" said Joe, as they laid him on deck. His face was deadly pale, the eyes half closed, and his tongue protruded from his mouth.

"No, he ain't dead," replied Captain Rhines. "He ain't a going to die. He's too good to die. Roll one of them empty casks along here."

They laid him across the cask, and rolled him

gently from side to side (it was the old way), in order to get the water out of him. They then stripped off the wet clothing, rubbed him dry, and wrapped him in blankets. Captain Rhines set him on deck, and, putting a board slanting behind, leaned him back against it, and told them to slap his hands and the bottoms of his feet.

"Why don't you lay him down?" said Joe.

"What makes your father, when he has the asthma, sit up all night in a chair, instead of lying down in his bed?"

"He can breathe better."

"So can this boy, poor fellow! if he is not past breathing."

They continued their efforts to restore consciousness, but there was no motion of the heart or pulse perceptible, nor could it be perceived that he breathed.

"It is all my fault," said the captain; "nobody to blame but myself. I ought not to have let him meddle with the harpoon. How shall I ever face his mother and Uncle Isaac? She trusted him to me. She, and his father, and Uncle Isaac were all down to our house the week before I came away, and she seemed so pleased and happy to think he was going with me! Forty years I've followed the

sea, and never lost a man overboard. Had scores of our boys with me, and to think this should happen to him!"

He now, closing the boy's mouth and one nostril, blew into the other till the lungs were filled with air; the mate, pressing upon the chest, expelled it again. This they repeated for some time. At length there was a faint gurgling.

"Hark! what's that?" said Joe; "it sounds like breathing. He's coming to."

"Give me a feather," said the captain. He held it to Isaac's mouth. "Look, some of you; your eyes are younger than mine. See if it moves."

"Yes; I believe it does," said Joe. "There, it moved then — didn't it, John?"

"Yes, but it was your own breath that moved it."

"But it moves now," said Sam Edwards. "There, look for yourselves. See how he draws it into his mouth."

As he spoke, the boy drew a long breath, filling the chest, and expelling the air, with a feeble moan.

"Thank God for that!" said the captain, dropping upon his knees, while a murmured amen arose from the rest.

"The clock ticks," he continued, placing his hand on the region of the heart.

The fingers, which had retained their bent position, now relaxed; the lips quivered, and the blood returned slowly to the cheeks. He was now put into the cook's berth, as being near the fire, and the most convenient place in which to make hot applications. Breathing was now established; but the pulse fluttered, the eyes were staring, the body was cold, and there was no consciousness.

"Flour," said the captain, "have you got any dry salt?"

"Plenty, massa."

"Heat some hot in a kettle, and put it to his feet and hands, and wring out a cloth in hot water, and lay it on his stomach."

In a short time after these applications were made, the tongue was drawn into the mouth, the eyelids quivered, expression returned to the vacant features, and in a feeble voice he said,—

"Where am I?"

"You are in this world, and will see your mother again, dear boy," replied the captain, with tears of joy streaming down his cheeks; and completely mastered by the reaction of his feelings, he kissed the boy again and again.

"What's the vessel about?" he asked, recalled to a sense of his duties.

"She's lying to," replied the mate, "with a fair wind ; for here's 'Dead Man's Key' right ahead."

"That's a first-rate land fall. It's good luck all round. Keep off south-west."

He now gave the boy some brandy and water, and told Flour to kill a chicken, and make him some broth. He also told Isaac that he never would be drowned now, but have a long life, and die in his bed, for that people who came so near being drowned always did.

"How pleasant the sun and everything looks!" said he, stepping out from the galley. "It never looked half so pleasant before. Somebody's praying for us, I know. I guess it's my wife."

"Flour," said the boy, greatly revived by the stimulant and the broth, "can't I turn out?"

"Not yet, sonny ; you's too weak."

"Flour, did the porpoise get away?"

"Forgot all about him. Me go see."

He found the porpoise still towing astern (but dead), and hauled him in.

CHAPTER VI.

DEAD MAN'S KEY.

THE land they had just made — “Dead Man’s Key” — was on the north part of Salt Key Bank, so named from an island upon it bearing that name, where salt is made. It is much smaller than the Great Bahama Bank, having a greater depth of water, and is about thirty hours’ sail from Havana. Between the western edge of this Bank and the Cuba shore, the Gulf Stream runs at the rate of four or five knots an hour, setting to the north-east, and, when the northerly gales blow against this current, it makes a sea that is frightful. At the south-eastern extremity there is but little current, and vessels, in order to escape it, endeavor to leave the Bank at that point. They passed the Bank safely in the right direction, making Salt Key at day-break, when the wind hauled to the south-west, and, after forcing them into the current, died away, and they were becalmed.

The first thing Isaac did, after he had recovered

from the effects of the accident, was to skin the blubber from the porpoise, and try it out. He also saved the jaws as a trophy of his success, and a memorial of his narrow escape from death.

"We are going to have a norther," said Captain Rhines, "right in the worst place, too, and we all under water; a nice sea it will kick up, blowing against the current. I wish we had not left the Bank. We could have laid to there in smoother water, and anchored under the lee of the keys."

"Why not run back?" asked the mate.

"I won't do that when so near port, without it's a matter of life and death. A norther is short and sweet; don't last more than twelve hours, and when it lets go, the wind this time of year generally comes round by the way of the north-east, which is fair. The current against the norther won't run four knots. We shall make three lee-way; and, heading to the westward, we shall nearly hold our own. So that, if we can keep the sea from sweeping our decks, and tearing her to pieces, we shall be near our port of destination when the gale breaks."

The mate shook his head. A thorough seaman, and regardless of personal peril, he saw no way to save the deck load of cattle and other things except

by running back to the Bank at the approach of the gale, and taking shelter under the lee of the keys.

“A weatherly vessel in good trim has all she wants to do in a norther in this channel; and how we are to lie to in this thing, down to her wales in the water, without having our decks swept by every sea, I must confess, I cannot see. I don’t believe all the oil in Nantucket would keep the sea out of her.”

“We shall see,” replied the captain.

The gale came on about twelve o’clock at night; and the Ark, under a balance-reefed mainsail, lay very broad, and took a good deal of water over all. The captain manifested not the least uneasiness, whatever he might have felt. But not so with the mate; he evidently considered the whole affair as most reckless management. Sam Edwards and Yelf were thoroughly alarmed; but for the rest, they reposed such sublime confidence in Captain Rhines that they were as unconcerned as possible.

“If one of these big seas comes aboard, Ike,” said Yelf, “it will be all day with us. Ain’t you afraid, Isaac?”

“Not I. I don’t calculate to be frightened till

Captain Rhines is. I don't suppose he wants to founder any more than the rest of us."

"I don't expect he does; but I think there's such a thing as being foolhardy. Most men grow timid as they get in years, but he grows worse and worse."

The cry was now raised, "Horse down!" and, by the time he was got upon his legs, another was down, and the wind increased. By and by a sea came over that broke into the galley, set the sheep afloat, and filled the cabin half full of water.

"Take in the mainsail, and try her under the foresail!" was the order; but she lay worse still, shipping another sea, that, breaking into the foresail, tore it from the bolt-ropes, and came near taking the long-boat out of her chocks, and sweeping everything and everybody from the deck. Borne along with the sea, the turtle, unnoticed in the confusion and darkness, went over the quarter, and, from the crest of a wave, regarding with great complacency the peril of his captors, sought his native keys.

She was now put under the mainsail again.

"I'll make you lay, you clumsy beast! See if I don't!" said the captain. "Rouse up that big hawser from the cabin, and bear a hand about it!"

he said, in tones sterner than Isaac had ever heard before.

Rushing below himself, he came up with a long piece of large, heavy rigging, that had formed a part of one of the ship's stays whose masts came ashore at Elm Island, with an eye at each end.

"Be lively with that hawser, my lads; get the end forward as fast as you can."

Taking Joe, Seth, and Flour with him, they put the eyes in each end of the span, over the ends of the spar, to which Joe had treenailed the plank, drove them on, made fast a kedge anchor to the spar, and bent the hawser to the bight of the span. By the time it was completed, the mate, with the others, had a range of the hawser forward.

"Over with him! he's no friends! Come, Flour, you think you can outlift me; here's a chance for you;" and, watching the roll of the vessel, they flung the spar from the bow. As the Ark rapidly drifted away from it, the mate caught a turn with the hawser over the windlass bitts.

"Handsomely, handsomely, Mr. Strout! If you snub her, you'll part the hawser. That's a large spar, and that plank edgeways takes a rank hold of the water."

The Ark now began slowly and reluctantly to

come head to the wind and sea, while the strain on the rope increased in proportion as scope was given. It was a new hawser of Russia hemp; but the smoke rose from the windlass bitts, and the tar oozed from the strands, as the mate gradually ceased to pay out.

"O, you hate to come — don't you?" said the captain, drawing a long breath, and wiping the perspiration from his brow; "but you've got to. You've had your own way long enough."

The hawser was now made fast; and the Ark, head to the sea, rose and dropped back from the waves, as they came along, behaving admirably.

"She rides as easy as a duck in Elm Island Harbor," said the captain; but, in order to make all sure, get that barrel of ile, and lash it on the cat-head."

They found no water in the cabin. It had all gone out of the scuppers in the cabin floor, and run out at the bottom.

"It's first rate," said the captain, "to have a ship without bulwarks or bottom. Everything runs through or over. They are excellent to ship seas in — as good as an old lady's colander."

They now put additional slings under the horses, and stuffed the sides of the stalls with hay and

oakum, to prevent bruising them. The gale was now at its height; but the harder it blew, the sharper the Ark lay, although the strain on the hawser was tremendous. The sea combed all around her, and she stood at times almost on end; but away to windward, as she fell back, streamed the thin film of oil, smoothing the ragged tops of the waves, and saying to the eager billows, —

“This is the Ark of Elm Island; you can’t come in here.”

Isaac, who was eager to gain all the information in his power, was greatly interested in this simple experiment of the captain’s, which had saved the Ark from inevitable destruction, and enabled her, though down to her wales in the water, to ride safely, although the spray, borne by the wind from the crests of the waves, enveloped her from stem to stern. He approached him, as he sat on the windlass, with his hand on the hawser, watching the behavior of the vessel, and said, —

“Please, sir, tell me what you call this operation, and why it is that the hawser is so taut, and holds the vessel up to the wind.”

“The philosophy of it, my boy, is just this: The vessel drifts faster than the spar does, because the wind can’t take hold of that, nor the waves either,

as the anchor keeps it down; but the wind takes hold of the vessel, and the sea breaks against her. If she was held right square up to this sea by an anchor on the bottom, it would snap the biggest cable in the world, like a rotten rope-yarn, or ride her under water, and tear her to pieces; but this drag, as I call it, gives way, and lets her fall back when the wave comes; so that it's a sort of scudding, only it's scudding stern foremost.

"It's no use trying to resist the sea. There's nothing can resist that but the rocks, and they don't always have the advantage; but you can cheat it by giving way to it. Old John Green rides his boat right in the surf by a spring pole mooring, because, when the sea comes, the pole gives way. She wouldn't ride there ten minutes if she was anchored fast to the bottom. I like to have you ask me the reason this drag works as it does, my son," laying his hand upon the boy's shoulder; "I may well call you my son, for you would have been a dead Isaac if I had not persevered to bring you to life. Always try to look into the raal groundwork of things, and try to find out the reasons of them. There is a reason for everything. Whatever you see, think about it, and try to find out the reason of it. If you are

going to follow the sea, give your whole mind to it; study the nature of a vessel, and how the wind and sea operate on her, and everything connected with your calling. If I go into a harbor once, I can go again, because I go to work and sound it out, and log it in my head. I might just as well be spending my time so, when lying in port, as to be idling ashore, or on board other vessels. Then if I am caught on that coast in bad weather, and can't get a pilot, I'm not obliged to run to sea or lose my ship."

The reader will bear in mind that in those days there were no sailing directions, very few pilots or lighthouses, and that the old navigators were thrown almost entirely upon their own judgment, vigilance, and resources.

"If I had not been on board this vessel when you fell overboard, you would now be sleeping on the bottom of the sea. The others would have given you over for dead, and buried you in the sea; and I should have done the same, had it not been for taking notice, as I have been telling you to do."

"O, how was that, Captain Rhines? Do tell me!"

"I knew a dead man brought to life in Liverpool."

"O, but he wasn't dead!"

"Yes, he was dead."

"What! stick, stock, stone dead?"

"Yes. He was a young man, only twenty-two — a strapping, powerful fellow, and a clever one. Everybody liked him: he was a blacksmith. One day he was at work at the anvil, strapping a dead-eye for my vessel. I was well acquainted with him. He always did my work, and all the work of Mr. Welch's ships, whom I sailed for. This day an officer was after a friend of his to arrest him; and, when he came to take him, Robert struck the officer with the iron strap of the dead-eye, and he fell dead in his tracks. He said he didn't mean to kill him. There was no murder in his heart; only meant to keep him off. But he was a strong man, warm with his work, and struck harder than he meant to."

"But they ought not to have hung him if he didn't mean to."

"That's what people thought. I asked our minister about it. He said they hung him for what he *did*, not for what he *meant*. He, indeed, said he didn't mean to kill him, but that might be an after-thought to get clear; but God knew, and he might get mercy of his Maker if he didn't get any of

his fellow-men. I have^e thought a great deal about that, how, while other folks look at what we do, God looks at what we mean, sees what we do, whether we are at home, or way out on the briny ocean, and knows what we mean by it. I am not a religious man, but my mother used to tell me the same thing when I was a little boy. I tell the same to my John and to you. Isaac, remember, if you do a mean, wicked thing on purpose, if no eye sees you, there's two witnesses—God and your own conscience. They'll make trouble for you sooner or later.

“But about this man. He was hung, for I saw him hung. His wife's father was a doctor, and he brought him to life. They were afraid he would be hung over again; so his folks sent him across the Channel, and he is living there in Havre with his family, and at work at his trade.

“I had a man sick aboard, and was afraid he had the small-pox. So I sent for the doctor. After he was done with the sailor, I asked him into the cabin to take a glass of wine. We got to talking about Robert. Said he, ‘Robert is alive and as well as you are.’ I asked him about it, and how he brought him to life, and he told me.”

"But if dead folks can be brought to life, why don't they bring all of 'em to life?"

"It is only those where no vital part is injured who can be brought to life, and not one in a thousand of them — people who are hung or drowned, and such like.

"If, when they hung this man, they had broke his neck, that would have been the end of him; but where anybody is choked to death with a rope, or with water, and nothing is injured, it is another thing."

"I think I understand something about it. In these cases it is like a watch. When a watch stops because it is run down, you can wind it up, and set it going; and I have seen Captain Savage, when his watch had stopped, shake it, and start it; but if the mainspring was broke, he couldn't."

"That's just it."

"But I don't understand why, if one person that's hung or drowned can be brought to, — that is, if they are dead, — why all can't."

"That's what I asked him. He said he didn't know. Nobody knew. Only they knew that the age and constitution of people had something to do with it; and that, if left alone, they would never come to life any more than a watch could wind

itself up. They must have help from outside to start the wheels. But I learned this much, that, with proper effort, a great many people that are now dead might have been saved. I thought in a moment of little John Ryan, who was drowned in the mill-pond, and was not under water more than four minutes; and they didn't take any proper means to bring him to, because they couldn't feel any pulse. I made up my mind that, if ever occasion offered, I would put in practice what he told me; and you owe your life to it, for you was dead. There was no pulse, breath, or beating of the heart. Thus always obtain all the information you can from those who know more than you do. Never be above learning from anybody. A person who, on the whole, does not know half as much as you do, may know some one thing that is well worth your learning.

"But this gale is breaking. There is not half the strain on the hawser there was, and the sea is not so sharp. We must mend that foresail if we have to take the flying-jib to do it with."

In a few moments Isaac came running aft, and said the turtle was missing.

"The turtle missing!" said the captain. "I hope not. I was going to kill him to-morrow. Per-

haps he's crawled under the cattle." But a further search revealed the disagreeable truth that he was gone.

"He must have gone overboard with that last sea. I'd rather John Strout had lost a horse."

"That's not my opinion," said the mate.

CHAPTER VII.

HAVANA.

ABOUT twelve o'clock the next day the gale was over, the wind, as the captain had predicted from long experience of the winds on that coast, hauling to the north-east, and, with a fair wind, they were once more on the way to their port of destination. Just after they made the Iron Hills on Cuba, Captain Rhines came on deck with a coil of small line on his arm.

"Boys," said he, "we must have some signal halyards rove. I've never hoisted the Stars and Stripes yet, except in a privateer. The last time I was here, it was under British colors. Who of you is smart enough to climb the mast, and reeve them?"

"I!" replied Joe Griffin, drawing his belt a little tighter, and stretching out his hand for the line.

But Isaac, who was coming from the cabin with a basket of dinner dishes, heard the conversation.

"I'll go; do let me go; it belongs to me; boys

always do such jobs. If that great creature goes up there, he'll break the mast off!"

"You can't shin up there, you little rat! It's a long shin, and there's no ratlines. You'll fall and break your neck."

"No, I won't, Joe. I've climbed a tree enough sight higher than that before you come to the limbs."

Isaac wrapped the flag around him, took the hal-yards on his arm, and went aloft. He was red in the face, and pretty well winded, when he reached the main cross-trees. He rested there, recovered his breath, and started anew. When he got above the eyes of the rigging, and was obliged to climb the smooth pole, though the distance was short, he was well nigh exhausted; his muscles quivered, and seemed to have lost their power. His breath came in sobs; perspiration bathed his limbs; he slipped back more or less, and, in holding up with one arm and his legs, while he rove the line through the truck with the other, the last remnant of strength seemed expended, and it was with the utmost difficulty that he could grasp the mast with sufficient strength to prevent falling, or, as sailors say, "coming down by the run."

But when he at length reached the cross-trees,

recovered breath and strength, with what proud satisfaction did he take the flag—his country's flag, which had then but recently been given to the ocean breeze—from between the head of the mast and heel of the topmast, where he had tucked it during his ascent, and watch the broad folds as they streamed out on the wind!

He busied himself as long as possible in setting the colors, in order that the flush might disappear from his cheek, and the perspiration from his brow, as the proud boy did not wish Joe to perceive how completely he had been winded in the effort.

As they neared their port, and made the Moro Castle, which guards the entrance to the harbor of Havana, they saw a large ship two or three miles to windward, and, with the aid of the current, making good progress against the wind.

Captain Rhines viewed her long and narrowly through the glass.

"I know that ship," he said at length. "It's the Saratoga, one of Mr. Welch's ships, bound to Boston or Salem. I know her by her short topmasts and crooked sheer. Captain Radford, an old shipmate of mine, is in her. If we could have spoken him he would have reported us, and Mr. Welch would have made every effort to let our folks know it."

In order that our readers may have a clear understanding of the situation in which the captain was placed, we will revert for a moment to the relations then existing between Spain and her colonies, and also between the United States and the European powers.

At that period colonies were considered as so many sponges for the parent country to squeeze. They were expected to trade with her alone; the product of other countries must come to them through her.

Spain, at that time, prohibited the entrance into her ports, for home consumption, of the products of any country except those of her colonial empire; and, by forcing her colonies to consume no manufactured article, and none of food, except those imported from certain ports in Spain, she aimed to render the colonies entirely subservient to the interests and emoluments of the mother country, without the least reference to their natural rights, needs, or wishes.

It was very much the same in respect to Great Britain, France, and Portugal. It was the spirit of the age. Thus, by a treaty made between Great Britain and Spain, in 1667, it was provided that perfect reciprocity of navigation and trade should

be established between the King of Great Britain and the King of Spain, and their respective subjects and inhabitants. But as both those countries restricted the trade of their colonies, it was stipulated that these privileges were not to extend to the colonies unless, at any future time, such intercourse should be allowed to the subjects of any other foreign state.

The commerce of the island of Cuba, to a port of which the Ark was now bound, was a complete monopoly. Its inhabitants were not allowed to trade with any foreign country whatever, and were, of course, in respect to articles of absolute necessity, compelled to pay the price which the merchants of the mother country demanded, since there could be no competition.

In order to increase this dependence, agriculture was discouraged, lest they should in this respect become independent. The result of this was an extensive contraband trade, by which the inhabitants of Maine and Massachusetts contrived, both during peace and war, to supply the French, Spanish, and Portuguese colonies with American and even foreign products.

All the fleets of Spain, aided at one time by those of Great Britain, were inadequate to entirely

prevent this traffic. The inhabitants of Cuba and the other Spanish colonies did all they could to encourage it, since an American vessel would bring them a better article at half the price for which it could be procured from Spain. The governors of the colonies also all connived at it.

This contraband traffic was exceedingly lucrative. As it was neither more nor less than smuggling, these vessels, for fear of being found out, could not, to any extent, load at their leisure with coffee or sugar, but ran in during the night, or into out-of-the-way places, and received for their cargoes gold, silver, and precious stones.

During the war of the Revolution this traffic ceased, but at the conclusion of it was resumed, and continued till 1809, when the Spanish ports were thrown open to foreign trade. This trade was carried on not only by Americans, but English vessels from the Bermudas and Bahamas also engaged in it; but Maine and Massachusetts were the great centres of this commerce. From them went lumber, staves, fish, live stock, and foreign goods of all kinds, in vast quantities, to the French, Spanish, British, and Portuguese colonies; for, although before the Revolution we were permitted to trade with the British West Indies,

we were now excluded from them, and treated as foreigners.

But it was with Cuba that the largest amount of trade was carried on, on account of its proximity to the American coast, its enormous wealth, and the large amount of business transacted in Havana, where great numbers of Spanish men-of-war were built, thus creating a market.

At this period the prohibitory laws, of which we have spoken, were in full force; nevertheless they were not only evaded to a great extent by smuggling, but when, by reason of war or scarcity, the mother country was unable to supply her colonies, a discretionary power was given to governors to relax the laws and permit trade—a privilege they were quite willing to exercise, as it generally resulted in benefits to themselves.

Captain Rhines, though rude in speech, and without the advantages of education, was possessed of very superior natural abilities, which, had he been educated, would have rendered him conspicuous in any station in life. He was possessed of rare judgment, great powers of observation (which he had cultivated to the utmost), unbounded confidence in his own resources, great physical strength, and energy of purpose, that carried him over every obstacle, and, with all, sterling integrity.

Thoroughly acquainted with the state of affairs in Europe, and the colonial policy of the times, he knew that Spain, which united with France in the war waged by the colonies with Great Britain, had been crippled by it; that Spanish commerce was in a low state; that the contraband trade had fallen off during the war; that the islands were short of supplies, and that the authorities would be compelled to relax temporarily the prohibitory laws.

It was customary for those who were withheld by principle from smuggling, or who did not wish to incur the risk and labor of it, to run down among the islands pertaining to the different powers, for a market, often obtaining a license to discharge.

Captain Rhines, for the reasons which we have specified, expected to obtain permission to trade at Havana. Indeed, it would have been a great risk to have proceeded in the *Ark* to any of the more distant islands. He, to the great surprise of the mate (who was expecting every moment the order to heave to, and lay off and on till dark), kept the vessel directly for the mouth of the harbor.

"You don't intend," he said, "to go in, in broad daylight? There are always men-of-war there. They will seize us, vessel and cargo."

"I shall go in daylight if I go at all. I have

never been a smuggler, and don't intend to begin now. I'm not going to sneak into some creek in the night, and run my cargo in on the sly. I'm going to heave to at the mouth of the harbor, go ashore, and ask the captain general for liberty to trade."

"But suppose he won't grant it?"

"Then I'll go to a French island. There's more spirit of accommodation in a Frenchman's little finger than in a Spaniard's whole body; but don't you see, England has given them such a mauling during the war that it has made them a little more pliable; their resources of food have been exhausted, not having provisions to feed their colonies, and they won't let them raise crops to feed themselves; their merchant ships have been taken by the British, and the smuggling ending with the war, the captain general has missed his pickings. I tell you they have been kept mighty short through the war, and those who get here first will fare the best. The captain general will be glad to see us, and jump at it like a dolphin at a flying-fish. I shouldn't wonder if we found vessels there now that he has let in."

The Ark was hove to off the harbor, and the captain, going on shore, obtained permission to

trade—to sell his cargo for money, or exchange for the products of the island.

“He has let the bars down,” said the captain, when he returned. “I’ve got liberty both to sell and take away cargo.”

“But you’ve nothing to take it in.”

“I know that; but I always take all the privileges from a Spaniard I can get, whether I want them or not. Anybody never can tell what may turn up. The old don was very gracious. Whoever buys this cargo will have to make him a handsome present. These governors come out here poor, stay five years, and go home rich.”

When they arrived at the mouth of the harbor the sun was setting, and the sentry was preparing to haul down the flag on the Castle, after which no vessel is allowed to enter.

“What a pity we couldn’t have been here just half an hour sooner!” said the mate. “Now we must lie off all night.”

“I’m not going to lie off here in this thing. There’s just wind enough left to shove her in. If it should shift, we could neither claw off a lee shore nor ride out a gale.”

“But they’ll fire on us.”

“No; they won’t be ready to fire till we are by them.”

"But what will they do to you afterwards?"

"I don't know, and don't care. I'll risk the consequences. Go forward, Mr. Strout, and see all clear for anchoring. When they hail us, I'll sing out, Let go the anchor, and do you do the same, but be sure you don't let it go. When I want it let go, I'll send the boy forward to tell you."

The Ark, with the last of the breeze, shot rapidly into the mouth of the harbor.

"Let go the anchor!" was the order given as the vessel came under the guns of the Moro.

"Ay, ay, sir!" was the reply. Still the Ark kept on.

"Let go your anchor!" now came from the fort.

"Let go the anchor! Why don't you let go that anchor?" bellowed Captain Rhines.

"Let go the anchor!" screamed the mate.

By this time the Ark was well inside, safe from all winds, and the anchor was let go. They had won the victory. Pluck and seamanship had brought the rude vessel, or rather raft, safely to her port of destination, and without loss, except of the turtle, for which Captain Rhines was a sincere mourner.

When the Ark was properly secured, and the

sails furled, there was still daylight enough to distinguish objects at a short distance. They found themselves between a Spanish ship of the line, a four decker, the *Santisima Trinidad*, one hundred and thirty guns, and a large English merchant ship that had arrived just before them, and was waiting to tow up the harbor in the morning; and ahead, on the starboard bow, an American brig.

The captain said to Isaac, pointing to the man-of-war, —

“That is the biggest ship in the world.”

Which was true at that time. Lying on a reef on the western side of the harbor was a brig of about two hundred tons, bilged, and heeled towards the shore, the tide ebbing and flowing in her. She had been stripped of everything except the lower masts and bowsprit. Captain Rhines examined her with great attention, but made no remark.

CHAPTER VIII.

WARPING UP.

HAD a mermaid risen from the deep she could not have excited more attention than did the Ark from all who were within range of vision. The soldiers gazed from the walls of the forts on both sides of the harbor. Every port-hole along the broad side of the man-of-war was crammed with heads, and the sailors of the English ship looked on from the forecastle.

The harbor-master now came on board, and, after the usual salutations, said, —

“You were reported, captain, as running in after sunset, which is contrary to the law of the port.”

“But what else could I do?” replied he. “Just out of a norther, eight feet of water in the hold, and not a pump on board! Just look here.” And going to the well, he pulled up the rod, and asked the harbor-master to look down into the box and see the water.

The Ark had settled so much that her lower

wale was under water, and as she was covered with grass and barnacles, the open work was not apparent to a casual observer.

"If you are water-logged, captain, that alters the matter. You certainly are not in a condition to keep the sea."

No communication is allowed with a vessel till the harbor-master has boarded her; but the moment he was gone, a boat came alongside from the American brig, and her captain stepped on deck.

"Are you the mate of this craft?" he inquired of John Strout.

"Yes, sir."

"What makes her so deep, with no deck load?"

"She's only a shell, with no bottom, and the water flows in and out."

"Have you come from the States in her?"

"Yes, sir."

"How many days?"

"Twenty-seven."

"Where were you in the norther?"

"Lying between Key Sal Bank and Florida."

"And you lived through that gale, half under water, with all this live stock on deck? Well, I would rather see the man who got this thing up,

and brought her safely here, than the King of Great Britain. What is the master's name?"

"Benjamin Rhines."

"The dogs it is!" and the master, without another word, hurried to the cabin.

"Is this you, Captain Rhines, my old friend?" he exclaimed, seizing him by the hand.

"It certainly is, Captain Starrett!" replied the other, returning the grasp in a most cordial manner.

"I heard," said his visitor, "that you had left off sailing the briny ocean."

"I thought I had, but you see I've begun again."

"Well, Ben, you ought to break your neck now; you've lived long enough; you'll never go beyond this. Do you know you've arrived here just in the nick of time. Got any fish?"

"A few."

"Any staves?"

"A few."

"Provisions?"

"Yes."

"You'll make money."

"How is lumber?"

"High; clear up. There's none in the market. How much have you got?"

"Don't know; three hundred thousand, perhaps more."

"Don't you know what you bought?"

"Didn't buy it. My boy cut it;" and then he told his friend the whole story of Ben, Sally, and Elm Island.

"He's an awful man, that boy of yours. I saw him hoist a hogshead of molasses, and he'll head one up as easy as I can a barrel of cider. You know he was my mate two voyages, but I didn't think there was so much business in him."

"His head is as good as his arm, and his heart is better than both. He's a good son to me. I've been fortunate in my children."

"That is because you was a good boy yourself, and took good care of your parents in their old age. Your father and mother have said the same to me about you."

"Did you load at Portland?"

"Yes."

"What did your lumber cost you?"

"Seven dollars per thousand on the wharf."

"That is a good deal more than Ben's cost him when it was on board the vessel at Elm Island, — as much again, — while you had the expense of loading after that."

"Yes; ours cost us that on the wharf."

"What did you get for your lumber?"

"Thirty-nine dollars per thousand."

"When do you expect to get away?"

"I shall go the first chance."

"Will you take a letter for me?"

"Yes, and I'll send it to your place. There are coasters that take loads of goods of all kinds, and go on trading voyages all along the coast, to the British lines. I'll give it to some of them that I'm acquainted with."

"What vessel is that ashore on the Ponto?" (punta).

"She is a Rhode Island vessel — the Congress."

"How came she there?"

"She mis-stayed, and the swell hove her on. She struck on a round rock, and knocked a hole in her. She was stripped and sold. A Spaniard over to the Regla bought her hull."

"Is she old?"

"No; built since the war. They say she was built of first-rate material — a good sailer and carrier."

"Who bought the spars, sails, and rigging?"

"An old fellow — I can't think of his name — who buys all such things. I must bid you good night."

"Not till you have drank to old friendship. Isaac, get some glasses."

"I suppose you will warp up in the morning?"

"Yes, the first thing before the breeze comes."

"I'll take my crew, and help you. I've got a black crew—the biggest darkies you ever saw. You must expect some noise; for a nigger can no more work without a song, than a Frenchman can talk if you tie his hands."

"I like a song. It makes things go lively. I've got one that's as big as any of them, and I dare say will make as much noise."

"I don't know about that. They are the noisiest, and, I must say, the smartest set of darkies that I ever had; and I always carry black crews. They are all Portland darkies — Browns, Stuarts, Shepards, and Johnsons, and one Isaiah Phillips, who keeps all the rest good-natured, and is the great chanty-man among them."

"Well, fetch him on, and calculate that all hands are to stop aboard to dinner."

Early in the morning, before the break of day, Captain Rhines, taking his mate with him, on whose judgment he very much relied, went over to look at the brig. She was heeled towards the shore, and had a hole in her bow abaft of the

cat-head as big as a hog'shead, and the tide ebbed and flowed in her. After they had examined her thoroughly, they sat down on the rocks to compare notes. Captain Rhines began to whittle; his mate to pick a strand of rope into oakum.

"What do you think of her, John?"

"She's an excellent built vessel to begin with, and of first-rate timber."

"She isn't hogged," said the captain.

"No; her hood ends are not started, nor her stern, garboard, nor any of her butts, nor her water-ways. Her planks are some chafed, but, as far as I can see, the injury is confined to the hole in the bow, and the whole bottom on that side wants calking."

"But her rudder's gone."

"Well, we can put the Ark's to her, and get timber, plank, and iron enough out of her to stop that hole. She will also furnish oakum, and her cables and anchors will do for her. I'll buy her, John, if I can get her cheap enough, and her spars, sails, and rigging, and put a cargo in her, and we'll make a double voyage and money out of it. But I must go and find out the Spaniard who bought her before they know the Ark has no bottom. If he finds out I have no vessel to go home in, he'll

trump up on the price. I was calculating to get back in a contraband, but I'll go back in my own vessel, and make more on the homeward than on the outward passage, or I am mistaken."

"What a treasure Joe Griffin will be now!" said the mate.

"That he will; and Yelf and Edwards have both worked in a ship-yard. It's well for us that we are so strong-handed. Keep it to yourself, John, till I arrange matters."

As the distance was short, they were back to the vessel by the time the sun was an hour high.

Although the war was at an end, and a treaty of peace made between the United States and Great Britain, there was still considerable bitterness of feeling. When the war closed, the British government manifested a willingness to form a treaty of commerce upon a reciprocal basis; but finding that the States differed among themselves, one of them admitting foreign vessels without imposts, and that the States, having no federal bond of union, could not impose retaliatory duties, except by the act of undivided States, but that their ships could come to our ports upon the same terms as our own, excluded us from the trade we had enjoyed with their West India colonies before the

war. This tended to perpetuate ill feeling. It seemed like an effort to retaliate by legislation for the defeat they had experienced in war. They were also fond of saying that the colonies, unable to agree upon any form of government, would fall to quarrelling among themselves now that the pressure of a common peril was removed.

The sailors of the English ship were by no means sparing in their criticisms of the Ark, and the vessels were so near that their language could be heard.

At length one of them sung out, —

“Ballahoo, ahoy!”

“What do you want?” asked Joe.

“What’s the name of that ballahoo? and what’s the price of mutton?”

“This craft,” replied Joe, “is called the ‘Bunker Hill.’ She hails from the United States of America—perhaps you’ve heard of the place. That ere striped cloth up there is their flag, and when I came from home our people were talking about putting the American eagle on it, he screams so awful. He screamed so amazing one time he frightened General Gage (perhaps you’ve heard of him), so he left.”

At length the English captain came on deck,

with a ruffle-bosom shirt, a white linen handkerchief in his hand, and a very red face.

Captain Rhines bowed, and said, "Good morning;" but the other did not deign a response.

"He's not a gentleman, if he is master of a fine ship," said the captain to his mate. "A cat may look upon a king."

The captain thought no more of the circumstance; but not so the mate and crew. They were very much enraged, especially Flour, who had all the veneration for Massa Rhines that an African has for the idol of his tribe.

It would have been strange indeed if Joe Griffin could not have thought of some method of returning the compliment.

"I tell you what, boys," he said, "they are going to warp up this morning; we'll just warp right away from them in this ballahoo, as they call her."

"You can't do it," said Edwards. "They've got a large crew, the ship is clean, and not deep loaded, while we are foul and water-logged."

"Yes, we can do it," said the mate. "The brig's crew are coming to help us, and *we will do it.*"

"We will have two kedge anchors and two warps, and I'll run the lines," said Joe. "I reckon

I'm the boy for that. I'll go aboard the brig now, and ask them to bring a kedge with them." He did more than this. He told Captain Starrett of the rudeness of the captain of the ship, and made his black crew, three of whom had been in the army of Independence, feel just as he did himself.

He borrowed a warp on board the brig, and making it fast to her chains, brought the end back with him, that it might hold the Ark while they were getting the anchor, and be in readiness. He had another coiled in the canoe with a kedge. By the time they were done breakfast the brig's crew were on board. They justified their captain's encomium, although Flour was, after all, a little larger than the biggest of them.

They were dressed in checked shirts and white duck pants, which contrasted strongly with their black skins, and each one had a handkerchief of bright colors bound around his head, with the ends streaming out behind.

Isaiah Phillips, the chanty-man, was the youngest of the whole; not so tall as the others, but very thick set, jet black, and straight as a rush. He was deeply pitted with the small-pox—a round, good-natured face, with remarkably fine wool, of

which he was evidently quite proud, as it was curled with great care, and hung round his forehead and temples.

They sat round the galley, their black faces and bare arms shining in the sun, making the acquaintance of Flour (who was giving them an extra allowance of coffee, at the same time supplementing the previous efforts of Joe by telling them the good qualities of his captain, and how scurvily he had been treated by the Englishman), waiting for the word of command; for the mate had said, "We will man our windlass the moment the Englishman mans his, and not one second before."

We have already spoken of the natural disposition of the negro to sing when at work. Their songs have no merits of composition, being the merest trash. Neither does the negro think it necessary that they should rhyme, — they may or may not, — or that there should be the same number of feet. He will have the time correct, as he will leave out or prolong words at pleasure, with the most sovereign contempt, both of sense and the king's English.

Songs of labor seem to meet a universal necessity, and supply a common want. They are in use to lighten labor, from the boatmen among the lochs

of Scotland to the seamen of the tropics, and accomplish this by securing unity of action.

Suppose eight men undertook to hoist a weight which it required all their strength to raise. If each pulled separately, it would be just the same as though only one man was pulling at the weight. No matter how many of them were pulling, it would never be raised ; but the song unites all their efforts, and the more accurately they observe the time of the song, and connect their efforts with it, the lighter the labor, and the greater the economy of strength. The song also renders labor pleasurable, for there is a love of it in human nature, and, by furnishing regular periods for breathing, renders labor less fatiguing.

How much more tiresome it is to pull a boat with muffled oars, because you miss the click of the oar in the rowlocks! Who could thresh all day if the flails did not make a noise as they strike the grain? The cooper beats out a tune as he drives the hoop. What weariness comes over the soldier on a march when the music stops! and how instantly his muscles are braced when it strikes up!

The songs of the negro seamen generally refer to their labor — hoisting or stowing molasses, or screwing cotton, which is severe labor, where unity

of effort is of the first importance; and here the negro's accurate ear renders them most effective, and they will accomplish more, with less fatigue to themselves, than white men. No matter how many of them are on a rope, their pull tallies precisely with the time of the song, and they will put in the queerest quirks and quavers, but all in time. Perhaps there may be one negro in a million who has no idea of time. If such a one gets hold of the rope, and makes a false pull, it affects them as much as a false note would a well-drilled choir. They will instantly hustle him out, crying,—

“Get away, you waw, waw nigger! You dunno how to pull!”

These songs produce the most singular effect upon the negroes, insomuch that they seem hardly conscious of fatigue, even while exerting themselves to the utmost. Wages have been paid to a negro for merely singing when a large cargo of molasses was to be discharged in a hurry, the extra labor which he excited the rest to perform being considered as more than an equivalent for his wages, while it prevented a rival from obtaining his services. A singular illustration of this was given many years ago in Portland, Maine. Eight negroes were hoisting molasses, one very hot day,

aboard the brig William. They were having a lively time. Old Craig, a distinguished singer, was opening his mouth like an old-fashioned fall-back chaise. A negro, — an agent for the Colonization Society, — very black, dressed in white linen trousers and coat, Marseilles vest, ruffle-bosomed shirt, nice beaver on his head, with a bundle of papers in his hand, came down the wharf, and went into a merchant's counting-room to collect a subscription. As he came out, his ear caught the tune.

He instantly came on board the vessel and listened. He grew nervous, imitated the motions of those at the tackle, and, by and by, off went the linen coat, the hat and papers were laid aside, he rushed among the rest, and, clutching the rope, like a maniac, began to haul, and sing, —

“ Eberybody he lub someting ;
Hoojun, John a hoojun.
Song he set de heart a beating ;
Hoojun, John a hoojun.”

When reeking with perspiration, he stopped: the white pants, vest, and ruffled bosom were spoiled. As he went up the wharf, casting many a rueful glance at his dress, Old Craig, looking after him, exclaimed, —

"No use put fine clothes on de 'possum! What bred in de bone, dat come out in de meat."

The leader sings the principal part of the song (often composing it as he goes along), while the others sing the chorus.

When the winch was introduced to discharge vessels, these songs in the northern seaports ceased, the negroes disappeared, and Irishmen took their places, the negroes refusing to work with a winch, because that kind of labor did not admit of singing.

The clank of the pawls on the ship's windlass was now heard.

"Man the windlass!" was the order.

"Slip, slap!" cried Seth. This is a sailor phrase for heaving the windlass around at one motion instead of two, as is generally practised, and as was done on board the ship.

The ship possessed the advantage at the outset of being ahead of the Ark; but, as the crew of the latter weighed their anchor in half the time, the two vessels were now abreast.

"Massa Mate," said Flour, taking that officer aside, "if you want dese niggers to show you de time o' day, jes' praise 'em, and let 'em hab de music. Black man he lub song; song make him throw hisself, tear hisself all to pieces."

The English sailors now began to sing.

“Stop that!” said the captain. “None of that noise here.”

“Now, boys,” said the mate, patting Isaiah on the shoulder, “give us a shout that’ll raise the dead.”

ISAIAH’S SONG.

“Wind blow from de mountain cool,

O, stow me long.

Mudder send me to de school;

Stow me long, stow me.

Den I stow myself away,

O, stow me long.

Way, way to de Isle ob May;

Stow me long, stow me.

Go ashore to see de town,

O, stow me long.

Hear de music, walk aroun’;

Stow me long, stow me.

Dere I hear Miss Dinah sing,

O, stow me long.

Washin’ linen at de spring.

Double Chorus. —Ha-a, stow me long,

Stow me long, stow me.

Straight I lub Miss Dinah Gray,

O, stow me long.

Dinah lub me, so she say;

Stow me long, stow me.

Get her necklace, get her ring,

O, stow me long.

Happy nigger, shout and sing ;

Stow me long, stow me.

Wind a blowin' fresh and free,

O, stow me long.

Vessel ready for de sea ;

Stow me long, stow me.

See de tear in Dinah's eye,

O, stow me long.

Berry sorry see her cry.

Double Chorus. — Ha-a, stow me long,

Stow me long, stow me.

Tink ob Dinah ebery day,

O, stow me long.

Wishin' ob de time away ;

Stow me long, stow me.

Buy her gown, buy her fan,

O, stow me long.

Dinah lub anudder man ;

Stow me long, stow me.

Wish I hadn't been a fool,

O, stow me long.

Neber run away from school.

Double Chorus. — Ha-a, stow me long,

Stow me long, stow me."

At intervals they would unite in one universal shout on the double chorus. Then Isaiah, bringing the flat of his foot down to advertise them of what was coming, came out on the word "ha-a"

with a guttural so purely African, that the negroes would jump from the deck.

In the mean time the Ark was moving two feet to one of the ship, rocking and rolling to the tramp of the men and the time of the tune.

“Why don’t you pull, you lazy rascals?” shouted the captain of the ship. “Will you let these Yankees warp a raft faster than you can a ship with clean bottom and bright copper? Haul, or I’ll start you with a rope’s end!”

“Captain Rhines,” said Isaac, catching up the end of the main-sheet, “may I shake this in his face, and ask him if he wants a tow-line?”

“By no means, since that would be putting ourselves on the same level with a man who is a servant, and has a master; but we, who sail under the Stars and Stripes, and are citizens of a republic, whose people govern themselves, owe it both to our government and ourselves to conduct as gentlemen, especially in a foreign port, where we bear its flag, and represent its principles.”

Isaac blushed, dropping the rope as though it burned his fingers, and, at the same time, looking around to ascertain if any one else heard the conversation.

But it was most amusing to watch the effect of

the song upon Flour, who was plucking some chickens at the galley for a stew. His body swayed back and forth, and he pulled out the feathers to the time of the tune, tearing the skin in all directions.

“Never did see sich chickens as dese. Can’t pick him, no how.”

At length he could contain himself no longer, and, having put his chicken in the pot, rushed among his black friends, and gave vent to his emotions in song.

FLOUR’S SONG.

“De blue-bird robbed de cherry-bird’s nest,

Hilo, boys, a hilo.

He robbed her nest, and brake her rest,

Hilo, boys, a hilo.

Cherry-bird chirp, and cherry-bird cry,

Hilo, boys, a hilo.

Cherry-bird mourn, cherry-bird die,

Hilo, boys, a hilo.

De black cat eat de blue-bird now,

Hilo, boys, a hilo.

He catch him sittin’ on de bough,

Hilo, boys, a hilo.

He nip his head, he tear his breast,

Hilo, boys, a hilo.

Pay him for de cherry-bird’s nest,

Hilo, boys, a hilo.

De gard'ner shoot de ole black cat,

Hilo, boys, a hilo.

Den dat make it tit for tat,

Hilo, boys, a hilo.

De gard'ner pull him down de tree,

Hilo, boys, a hilo.

Den dat square de yards, you see,

Hilo, boys, a hilo."

Elated with their success in distancing the ship, the negroes and their white companions increased their efforts, which seemed already pushed to the utmost limits of human endurance.

Bathed in perspiration, smoking like race horses, and wild with excitement, they struck up a still quicker tune, intermingling with the words most singular yells and quavers.

"That's the time of day, my lads!" shouted the mate, catching hold of the warp, and joining in the chorus, completely carried away by the common impulse. "That's a bully song!" he cried; "you are worth your weight in gold."

The negroes instantly manifested their appreciation of the compliment by exclaiming, —

"Gib it to her, hand ober hand! Isaiah, dat tell de story dat make de chile cry!"

“HAND OBER HAND” SONG.

“Cuffee stole my bacca,
Hand ober hand, O.
Scratch him,
Hand ober hand, O.
Put it in his pocket,
Hand ober hand, O.
Kick him,
Hand ober hand, O.
Now he’s gwine to smoke it,
Hand ober hand, O.
Bite him,
Hand ober hand, O.”

The excitement now mastered Captain Rhines and his friend, who both added their efforts. By reason of so much additional strength, the Ark went ahead faster than they could gather in the slack.

“Walk away with it, my boys,” said the captain; and, taking the warp on their shoulders, they walked along the deck, still keeping step to the song.

WALKING SONG.

“Take de line, an’ walk away,
Ho-o; ho, ho, ho.
Gwine to leabe you; cannot stay,
Fire down below.

Gwine to leabe you, Johnny Bull,
Ho-o; ho, *ho*, ho.
'Cause yer dunno how ter pull,
Fire down below.
Like as do dis Yankee crew,
Ho-o; ho, *ho*, ho.
Warpin' ob de ballahoo,
Fire down below."

Beneath the pressure of this continuous pull, the Ark went through the waters as though under sail, and reached her berth before the ship had made a third of the distance, notwithstanding her captain, in his mortification at being thus outstripped, permitted, and even ordered, his men to sing. But the sailors, sulky at being debarred from their customary privileges, sung a song called "Old Gregory," the measure of which was so slow, that the vessel went slower than ever.

"Guess dat ship be gwine tudder way," said Isaiah. "'Pears so she is. Yah, yah, yah!"

Now that the object was accomplished, the negroes manifested evident signs of weariness; but instead of getting in the shade, as white men would have done, they sat down in the blazing sun to rest and dry off.

They forgot their fatigue, however, when Cap-

tain Rhines, after praising and thanking them for their services, distributed liquor and tobacco, and told Flour to give them all they could eat for dinner, and as good as there was in the vessel.

Long after they had eaten dinner, and Captain Starrett and his crew had gone on board their own vessel, the ship came along, and anchored near them.

"I am not satisfied yet," said Joe to the mate. "These captains will go ashore this afternoon. I should like to pull by his fancy boat in our old canoe. That would nettle him as much again as beating him with the Ark."

"If we got beat, that would spoil all we have done. Their boat will pull four oars; the canoe has but three, and the boat pulls a great deal easier."

"I'll tell you how it can be done," said Seth. "You, Joe, and Flour are the three strongest men in the vessel. Now, if you don't think it beneath your dignity to be boy, and pull the captain ashore, you three can do it."

"My dignity shan't stand in the way."

The captain of the ship seated himself in his gig, took up the yoke-ropes, which were made of red and blue cord, and gave the command, —

“Shove off! Let fall! Give way!”

In true man-of-war style they pulled towards the quay.

Captain Rhines said, —

“Boys, I guess we’ll go too;” and, taking up the steering paddle, gave the canoe a shove that sent her clear of the vessel. The old dug-out ranged up alongside of the ship’s boat in a moment.

Joe sported a pair of tow trousers with one seam, that he had made himself, with a woollen shirt that had been red once, but was now faded to a dirty brown.

Flour rejoiced in frock and pants which Seth had worn on a previous voyage to tar down rigging in. He bought them to drag lumber in. And, to complete the picture, a bundle of codfish lay before the captain on the boat’s thwart.

“Pull!” said the English captain. “Pull ahead!”

His men exerted themselves to the utmost, but not a foot could they gain upon their disagreeable neighbors. At length the canoe shot ahead, and, leaving the boat far behind, occupied the best place at the stairs, and their antagonists were compelled to content themselves with an inferior position, and one where their captain must walk over other boats to reach the steps.

"Come ashore for me at sundown," said Captain Rhines.

"I'm satisfied now," said Joe, as they pulled leisurely back.

"So am I," replied the mate. "I'm thinking they will have more respect for ballahoos and dug-outs in future."

When Captain Rhines reached the quay, he found Captain Starrett waiting for him, by appointment, with his boat's crew.

"I want you, Captain Starrett, to take me to the Reglas in your boat; and while I am buying that vessel, I want you to go and buy her spars, sails, and rigging. These Spaniards play into each other's hands. If the one who owns the sails and rigging finds that I have bought the hull, before I get over here to-morrow (for it is too far for me to go to both places to-day), he will know I want her rigging, and make me pay his own price for it."

"But you may not buy the vessel; and then, if I should buy the rigging and other matters, you would have them on your hands."

"But I shall buy her. He is going to break her up for the iron, and I know she is worth more to me than she is to him."

"Suppose I cannot buy at a low price."

"Then I'll take the Ark's masts and rigging, buy a topsail, and rig her into a topsail schooner."

"What won't you do?"

"I'll have that brig, or my name ain't Ben Rhines."

Captain Starrett arrived at the boat first. In the course of an hour Captain Rhines came.

"Well," he said, "I've bought the brig."

"For how much?"

"Six onzas, \$102.00."

"I've bought the spars, sails, and rigging, studding-sails, and studding-sail gear."

"For how much?"

"Rigging, thirty onzas, \$510.00; sails, twenty-five onzas, \$425.00."

"Well, boys," said the captain that night at the supper table, "I've found a way for us all to get home, and carry all the corals, shells, sponges, and presents to sweethearts, parents, and friends you like."

He then told them what he had done. They were all delighted. There were happy faces around that cabin table that night, but none more delighted than Isaac.

"O, how glad I am I didn't go with Captain Savage! Now I can learn to handle square sails."

"Yes, my boy," said the captain, "and to put rigging over the mast-head, send up topmasts and yards, and stow cargo. There will also be royals for you to furl, and studding-sail gear to reeve. You won't have much time to strike porpoise, and get overboard. Joe Griffin, will you be master carpenter and blacksmith?"

"I will do the best I can; but what shall we do for tools?"

"I can hire what we need and have not got, and also hire some Spanish blacksmith to let you do what little work we shall need in his shop. I declare I'm afraid I shan't get home to plant potatoes. I wanted to plant that piece in the eastern field. I don't know what my wife will say. However, I guess I'll make more than I should planting potatoes. What possessed me to think I was worn out, I don't see."

CHAPTER IX.

SELLING AND DISCHARGING.

LET us glance for a moment at the state of the country during those sad, disjointed years that succeeded the peace of 1783.

There was very little hard money in circulation, and that little was seriously diminished by the great influx of foreign goods.

There was no effective general government to lay imposts or protect the commerce of the country from foreign competition. No commercial treaties with any foreign nation, or national government empowered to enforce them; for, although Congress could make treaties with foreign nations, and contract debts, it had no power to enforce the observance of treaties, or to collect imposts to pay the debts, but was dependent on the will of the thirteen distinct legislative bodies. No merchant marine, for that had been swept from the ocean, except the old privateers and a few small vessels; but the trade of Maine was in fish and lumber, —

all they had to export,—and required vessels of considerable size and full built, while the old privateers were sharp, well riddled with shot, shaken and wrung to pieces, by their desperate conflicts with British men-of-war, or by carrying a press of sail to escape them.

There was not capital in the country to build suitable vessels, man and provision them, to any extent; for the men of wealth had loaned their money to the government, and Congress had not the power to enforce the collection of duties in order to pay it.

But this very state of depression only served to call forth the energies and reward the efforts of men like Captain Rhines and his son, and others of like character, but who, possessing greater advantages of education, and surrounded by different circumstances, were able to operate in a wider sphere. The markets were before them, enough waiting to receive and pay good prices for their products; but the ships and the capital were lacking. So far from folding their hands in discouragement, they set to work with what they had. Unable to build ships, they went to the East Indies in vessels that would now be thought unsuitable to go to Cuba, to England in sloops with a

topsail, the braces of the yards leading to the bowsprit.

It is on record that a youth of nineteen commanded a ship, on her voyage from Calcutta to Boston, with nothing in the shape of a chart on board but the small map of the world in Guthrie's Geography. The writer referred to adds, —

“Merchants of Boston and Salem, of moderate fortunes, engaged in branches of business which it was thought in Europe could only be safely carried on by great chartered companies under the protection of government monopolies; in short, they made up in daring and shrewdness for lack of capital.”

Unable to build large vessels, they went in small ones, or, like Captain Rhines, on a raft. Unable to raise money to pay seamen and officers, they gave them a privilege. The same principle was manifested in the war of 1814, and by their descendants. On the lakes they built vessels of green pine, put together with wooden pins, which, indeed, fell to pieces as soon as the battle was over, but not till they had crushed the enemy. Thus, if the men of that day used up a vessel in a voyage (at times), they made money enough to pay for her and build a better one.

Even the general distress and bankruptcy of the times (as is often the case) turned to the advantage of these resolute spirits, as it had the effect, by reason of a diminished supply, to enhance the price of their commodities in a foreign market, while it lessened the expenses of their outfit. It was thus in respect to Ben. Masts and spars brought a good price, because it required much energy, tact, and a heavy team to transport them to the seaports, where British vessels were ready to take them. Ben, by taking his masts and spars to Boston and Wiscasset in the manner he did, had obtained a very handsome profit on them.

But on the same land grew a large body of trees that were not fit for spars, but made excellent ship-ping boards, and were in demand in the West Indies. In addition to this was still another portion of the growth, fit only for wood or staves. Boards were so abundant, commerce so depressed, that to cut them for sawing, and then sell them at the mill, or take them to the wharves of a seaport, would barely pay for the labor; yet his forethought and energy, seconded by that of his father, caused all these circumstances to operate directly in his favor.

This growth must be cut to clear the land and

enable him to raise his bread, and must have been burned upon the ground had he not contrived a way to get it to market, where it would bring a richly remunerating price. The depressed state of business aided him as much as own abilities, by reducing the expense of getting it to market to a very low figure indeed ; and, as we proceed, we shall see that it likewise enabled him to obtain an increased price for his commodities. So that the poverty of the mass operated for the benefit of the individual, but not in any dishonorable way, as in the case of the speculator in bread, or one who buys the poor soldier's claim for a trifle to enrich himself by the future advance. On the other hand, the Rhinenses were endeavoring to start the wheels of business, and promote the general good. To be more particular, Ben had a small sum of money, which, in ordinary times, would have gone but little way, but, on account of the great lack of specie, he was enabled to hire his labor, and fit away the Ark with it ; and when she went to sea, all the money he had in the world was five dollars.

As for the fire-wood on the land, it was worth only fifty cents a cord, hauled to the landing. He could have obtained a dollar per cord in Salem,

and a coaster would have carried it there for fifty cents a cord. It was, therefore, better economy to burn it on the land, and fertilize the earth with the ashes. The next year's increased crop of grain and grass would be worth more than the value of the cord wood in the market.

The next morning all hands turned out in high spirits, elated with the idea of going home in the brig, instead of being thrown upon their own resources.

While on shore, Captain Rhines had made inquiries, in respect to prices, of the Spaniards, and of Captain Starrett, who was familiar with such matters. He gave the crew the results of his inquiries, and also told the mate and Joe that there was a Spaniard at the West Reglas who was very anxious to purchase the horses and sheep, together with whatever of hay and grain they had left, and would give the highest market price; that he should go to the city in the morning with Captain Starrett, who was to introduce him to a commission merchant who had sold many cargoes for him (all business there must be done through a Spaniard. No foreigner can sell his own cargo. Captain Starrett was an old smuggler, and knew all the merchants in Cuba), and said, meanwhile, they had better go ashore at

the Reglas, see the man, and trade with him if they could, and sell the rest to the bum-boatmen.

Captain Starrett came alongside in his boat, and the two friends went off together, Captain Rhines taking a barrel of apples, some nice fish, and a box of spermaceti candles, as a present for the captain general.

The mate deputed Joe to trade for both. He sold the horses for seventy dollars per head, which left him, after paying the expenses, one hundred and ten dollars clear, in gold, and the sheep for six dollars per head, which, together with some geese and provender, amounted, clear of all expenses, to ninety dollars.

The soil of Spain is one of the most productive of Europe; but, for reasons which it would lead us too far astray to specify, its agriculture was, at that time, and always has been, in a low state.

Cuba was not then, as now, liberally supplied with the products of this and other countries. Fruits and vegetables, such as apples, beets, turnips, potatoes, parsnips, and onions, commanded extravagant prices. An apple is as attractive to a Cuban as an orange, pine-apple, or cocoa-nut is to us.

As late as 1806, beets and parsnips brought,

when carried from New London to the French West Indies, sixteen dollars per barrel. Isaac had three barrels of beets, which his uncle had given him, and some nice codfish, which he had caught, cured for his own use, and some butter that Hannah Murch gave him, and he sold the whole for eighty-seven dollars, which was more than double the wages of an able seaman at that period. In addition to this he had obtained a practical knowledge of navigation and the use of instruments; kept a journal; taken his trick at the helm most of the time; learned to heave the lead, perform all the nice jobs in seamanship, and to sew a little with palm and needle. He had also received a great deal of most excellent advice, which, coming from one he loved, made a life-long impression. He was now to have the opportunity of going in a square-rigged vessel, of aiding in getting her afloat, of repairing and rigging, and of stowing her cargo, and, what was of no little importance, seeing the methods taken to do this by a man like Captain Rhines, without the aid of professed carpenters, blacksmiths, or calkers.

“Jerusalem!” said Joe; “Charlie thought he was passing rich when he received ten dollars for his share in the concern of Bell, Rhines, & Co.

What he'll say now I don't know. Guess there'll be some squealing and some surprises for Ben and Sally. He can buy boat's sails, tools, and a whole litter of pigs, if he wants to."

"Who is Charlie, I should like to know?" asked Isaac.

"He's just the smartest, best-hearted, best-principled boy that ever went on two legs — ain't he, John?"

"Yes," replied the mate.

"Is he smarter than I am?"

"Present company is always excepted."

"Does Captain Rhines like him?"

"Yes, almost as well as he does John."

Joe then told him Charlie's story.

The bum-boatmen having taken away their property, the sheep were tied, put into the canoe, and carried ashore.

But a very different plan was pursued in respect to the horses. They put a long halter on one horse, and led him to the side of the vessel. Isaac held the end of this, sitting in the stern of the canoe, while Joe held her up with the oars; the others, placing handspikes under the belly of the horse, pitched him overboard. Thus they did with all of them.

Horses are powerful swimmers when free from encumbrances. These never offered to swim ashore, but kept snorting and swimming around the other horse which Isaac was holding. Joe now pulled for the beach, the horses swimming after the canoe. On the beach was a pen running down to the water's edge, into which Isaac led the horse, and the others, following him, were secured.

The thought may strike our readers that Ben did not manifest much shrewdness in giving up so large a part of the vessel to his mate and men to carry ventures, by which they obtained such high wages; that it would have been better to have paid them the regular wages, carried these things on the ship's account, and put the profits in his own pocket; but he had no choice in this matter. He had not the money to buy these articles, or to pay his crew full wages. Neither would they have gone in such a craft to be turned ashore in a foreign country, without knowing how they should get back. But the venture offered inducements most attractive, and, to Yankee nature, irresistible.

When Captain Rhimes came aboard at night he found the decks cleared, the hawser that encircled the vessel removed, the cattle-pen taken away, and the long-boat in the water astern.

"We are ready to discharge," said the mate.

"So am I; I've sold."

"For how much?"

"Forty dollars a thousand for boards, ten for shingles, and ten per box for codfish; but I've done the best on beef. I've got ten barrels of beef that Ben bought and run in debt for, and I've sold them to a slaver for twenty dollars per barrel."

"Whew!" replied the mate; "the boards wan't hardly worth sawing at home and taking to market."

"I guess," said Joe Griffin, "we'll be able to give Sally a new dress. Won't Ben rig her up if she'll let him? He can afford to have a crane instead of a beech withe to hang the pot on."

"There's another thing better than all the rest, and affects us all."

"What is that?" asked the mate.

"Well, you see, they are mighty short of slaves. There has been a disorder — small-pox — among them that has killed them off. They are fitting out a great many slavers; those vessels want a great deal of beef; they are short of lumber, too, and the captain general, in order to encourage trade, has remitted the duties for four months. How have you sold the ventures?"

They told him.

"Have you sold my candles?"

"Yes, sir."

"Charlie's venture?"

"Yes, sir."

"Aunt Molly Bradish's butter?"

"Yes, sir."

"She's a good old soul! My mother used to think a sight of her. God bless her! Did you save one coop of hens?"

"Yes, sir."

"We'll keep them to lay eggs for us. The Union, Captain Starrett, is going in the morning, and will take letters. So go to writing, and in the morning we'll help him tow out."

The captain took his pen to estimate the sum he had gained by the remission of duties, when he found it amounted, on his whole cargo, to twenty-five hundred dollars or more.

By the time it was fairly daylight, the Union had weighed anchor, and set her sails.

Captain Rhines and his crew assisted to tow her down. She had been a privateer during the war, was very sharp, and carried a press of sail. Just as they came outside the Moro, a light breeze filled her sails, the boats hastily cast off their lines, and she glided swiftly ahead.

The voice of Isaiah came shrill and clear over the water, singing at the studding-sail halyards, —

“De cap’n’s a driver, de mate is a driver,

John, John Crow is a dandy, O.

Drive her through de water, O, why don’t you drive her?

John, John Crow is a dandy, O.

De foam at our fore-foot, rolling white as de snow,

John, John Crow is a dandy, O.

We sail o’er de ocean, and we sing Johnny Crow,

John, John Crow is a dandy, O.

We’re saucy to fight, we’re nimble to fly,

John, John Crow is a dandy, O.

Like de fish in de sea, like de bird in de sky,

John, John Crow is a dandy, O.

For de Stars and de Stripes we hab fought wid de foe,

John, John Crow is a dandy, O.

Now de fighting is ober, we will sing Johnny Crow,

John, John Crow is a dandy, O.

De fair wind he blowing, nebber cloud in de sky,

John, John Crow is a dandy, O.

We sheet home de royal, and we bid you good by,

John, John Crow is a dandy, O.”

“She doesn’t leave a wake bigger than a shad,” said Captain Rhines, looking after her. “There go the studding-sails aloft; fair wind and five knots current after her. Grass won’t grow on her bottom, I can tell you. He means to get back before

the duties are put on, and while beef is up, and he's promised those darkies a barrel of rum if they do it. Well, whoever carries that letter to Elm Island will meet with a warm reception I reckon, and will be likely to get the best to eat and drink there is in the house."

As prohibitory duties were imposed from selfish motives, they were remitted in the same spirit when necessity compelled. Thus, in recent times, Great Britain suspended her corn laws, and admitted foreign grain.

In the great hurricane, which destroyed in Cuba four millions of property, two hundred and seventy-eight vessels, killed one hundred and fifty persons, and overthrew two hundred houses in Havana, the Spanish government remitted the duties on lumber and provisions for several months.

These occasions were of much more frequent occurrence in past times than now.

The Ark was now hauled on to the beach till she grounded; then the galley and cabin were thrown overboard and towed ashore. Rollers were put under them, and they were hauled up on the beach with a tackle, and the chimney rebuilt.

They now began to raft the boards, and, by night, they had removed so many as to have liberated quite a number of the water-casks.

Flour worked with them of his own free will, as it was no part of his duty. So did the mate and Captain Rhines; and, as they had but a short distance to tow their rafts, the work went on with great rapidity.

When night came, Captain Rhines said, —

“Now, boys, that we have casks enough, I want in the morning tide to work upon the brig. If there should come a norther, she would go to pieces.”

The vessel lay near the edge of a reef that slanted off very abruptly into deep water. She was heeled towards the shore, and the hole was in the bow next to the land. By wading in and putting their heads under water, they were enabled to get at that portion of the hole that was beneath the surface. They proceeded to stop the leak temporarily with boards and oakum, over which they nailed several layers of tarred canvas, taking turns at working as long as they could hold their breath. Into the side next the water they drove some eyebolts, and to these secured the empty casks they had brought from the Ark.

Two anchors were now let go, and tackles made fast to them and to the heads of each of the brig's masts. The design was (as she sat quite upright)

to haul taut on the tackles, and cant her on to the casks, which, as the tide made, would buoy her keel, and she would slide off into deep water. The tide in Havana only flows about two feet, but they judged, as the ledge fell off so abruptly, that if they could heave her well down on her broadside, it would answer their purpose. The ends of the falls were now taken to the windlass and capstan of the brig, and hove taut. The calculation was, the next morning, as the tide made, to heave on the capstan and windlass as long as they could stand on deck, then nipper the falls, and haul her down by hand. They now pumped her out, and left her till the next day.

“If we can’t heave her down ourselves,” said the captain, “I can hire some free darkies.”

The English captain, who was really a good man at heart, though a little vain and inclined to bluster, had been no indifferent spectator of the proceedings going on in his vicinity. He noticed that the crew of this strange craft and the officers all lived together, while, at the same time, the commands of the captain were obeyed, and even anticipated, with a cheerfulness, intelligence, and alacrity unknown on board his own ship. He saw the boards rattled out of the Ark with a celer-

ity that was to him perfectly astounding; for Joe Griffin had declared before they began that he could drag more lumber than any man on board, he didn't care what his name was, and the rest were putting him to the proof. So much of the lumber was now discharged from the Ark, that he could see through her beneath the wales, and noticed that she was the mere skeleton of a vessel, and could not but do justice to the skill and energy which contrived and carried out so bold an undertaking. With his glass he watched them while at work upon the brig, and, himself an experienced seaman, saw that the man whose salutation he had refused to return was his superior.

"The man is a seaman, every inch of him," said he to himself. "They will get that vessel off, and repair, and go home in her, and he'll make more money than I shall in this ship. Well, if they are a sample, I don't wonder they got their liberty; and they deserve to have it," he concluded, with that sense of justice and fair play which underlies the English character.

"I'm half a mind to go over there and apologize to him, and offer to help him. I never felt so mean in my life."

Just before night, Captain Rhines went ashore.

When, having transacted his business, he returned to his boat, he found the English captain walking up and down the quay in a state of great excitement. His men had left the boat — probably got drunk. He had urgent reasons for going directly on board his vessel, and, though he had hailed several times, could get no reply.

“Captain Rhines instantly accosted him with, —

“Captain, I’ll put you on board your ship in my canoe, or, as she is a poor affair, I will tow you in your own boat.”

“I owe you an apology, sir,” replied the English captain, “for my rudeness the other morning. I am both sorry for and ashamed of it. Give me your hand.”

He insisted upon Captain Rhines getting into his boat, and they took the canoe in tow. When they reached the ship, he invited Captain Rhines to take a glass of wine with him.

“I would return the compliment if I could,” said Captain Rhines, “but really I have no decent place in which to entertain a friend.”

“Any place that is good enough for you is good enough for me. I shall visit you at the first opportunity. I want to see the man who run the lines (Joe Griffin) the day you ran away from me. I

never saw a man handle himself as that young fellow did. But there's one thing I must insist upon; that is, sending my crew to help you heave that brig down in the morning."

Captain Rhines gladly accepted the offered aid, and they parted the best of friends. In the morning they succeeded in getting the brig off, and brought her to anchor near the Ark. By night they had come up with the Ark's rigging, taken it off the masts, pitched the spars overboard, towed them ashore, and hauled the Ark alongside the wharf.

It was now Saturday night.

"We've no reason to be ashamed of this week's work," said the captain; "and to-morrow is the Sabbath of the Lord and a day of rest."

CHAPTER X.

A SUNDAY IN HAVANA.

SATURDAY afternoon, while the men were towing the Ark's spars ashore, putting the sails and rigging under cover, and pumping out the brig, Isaac took the hens into the canoe, and carried them on shore.

Isaac, you know, was a country boy, born and bred on a farm, among cattle, pigs, and hens. When he opened the coop, and let out the hens that had been shut up in that confined space for more than a month, into the warm sun and air, their evident joy delighted him, as it would you, had you been there. The rooster flew upon the top of the coop, flapped his wings, and crowed defiance to all Cuba, saying, —

“I represent the United States of America — who are you?”

Then, jumping down, he ran along towards his dames, trailing one wing on the ground, and making a little prating noise of mingled joy and con-

gratulation, while the hens dug great holes in the hot sand, and burrowed, and rolled, sticking out first one leg, and then the other, cleaning themselves up for Sunday. He stood and looked at them a while—it reminded him so strongly of home. Then, taking some of the boards that had been used for the cattle-pen, he made a house for them, with roosts and places for nests, and put in some hay for them to make nests of. He also found lying on the beach the shell of a large turtle, and digging a hole in the ground, he put it in, with the hollow side up, as a trough for them to drink out of.

The following morning the crew washed on the beach, shaved, and put on clean clothes, and all kept the day as a day of rest, as they had been trained to do from childhood—reading some portion of the Scriptures.

“Flour now came to the captain, saying, —

“Massa cap’n, read some to Flour.”

“What shall I read?”

“Please, massa, read about de Savior. I lub best to hear about him.”

The captain read to him several chapters in the First of John. The black then, after whispering to Captain Rhines, gave him an ounce of gold (seventeen dollars).

Captain Rhines then went with Isaac on board the brig. She lay at such a distance from the shore, and, being light, was so high out of the water, that, as they were seated on her deck, they had an excellent view of the fortifications, ships in the harbor, and the adjacent shores.

The harbor of Havana is one of the best in the world. The entrance is so narrow, that, at a distance, it resembles a gash cut in the land, when it expands into a basin capable of containing a thousand ships of the largest size.

On the right, as you enter, stands a fort called "La Punta." On the opposite side of the passage (which is about four hundred yards in width) rises the Moro Castle from the edge of a rocky bluff, its massive walls bristling with cannon. From the Moro runs a wall, mounted with heavy pieces of brass called the "Twelve Apostles," almost level with the water; and behind La Punta, the city of Havana, which is walled, the houses of stone, and the roofs covered with concave tiles.

As Isaac gazed around upon the walls of the city, the fortifications of immense strength, the enormous hull of the guard ship, with her three rows of teeth, and other men-of-war of smaller proportions, which lay farther up the harbor, the

wondering boy, who had never in all his life seen a man-of-war, battery, or fortifications of any sort, exclaimed,—

“All the people in the world couldn’t take this place.”

“It *was* taken once, at any rate,” replied Captain Rhines; “and I was at the taking of it.”

“Taken! these great forts taken! Were there any war vessels here then?”

“Yes; there were nine ships of the line and four frigates. It was done right in the hottest weather—O, screeching hot! We broke ground at the Moro the first of June, took it the last of July, and the city about the middle of August. There were three millions of booty, and no end to the sugar and molasses. We had only fourteen thousand men, while the Spaniards had more than twenty, and were on their own ground, and behind stone walls. Our people were very eager to take it; we sent every man we could spare; but, poor fellows! most of them left their bones here; very few ever came back.”

“But what did our folks want to come here to fight for? What had the Spaniards done to them?”

“At that time they were all by the ears in

Europe, fighting among themselves, and had been for years. France and England were natural enemies, always were, and always will be. There they are, two great nations, with only a narrow channel between them, looking at one another and trying to find something to quarrel about. Did you never see two boys, Isaac, that were pretty nearly matched, dare each other? One will make a mark on the ground, and say, 'Step over that if you dare.'"

"Yes, sir; or one will spit on a chip, put it on his hat, and say, 'Knock that off, and see what you'll get, old fellow.'"

"That was just the way with them. They would fight and fight, and bring all the other nations of Europe into their quarrel, till they were all worn out, and could raise no more men,—and only old men, children, women, and wounded soldiers, were left to till the ground,—and then make peace. When they came to square accounts, they would often give up what they had taken from each other; so that, as to land, they would stand about where they did before. They might have fought and mauled each other to their hearts' content, for all that we cared; but, you see, we were always drawn in. France held Canada right behind us, Acadia

on the east, and Louisiana on the other side. The instant war was declared between England and France, down poured the savages, with tomahawk and scalping-knife, on our settlements. They killed the babe in the cradle, and at the mother's breast, and the old grandfather in the chimney corner."

"O, yes, sir; I know all about that! My uncle has told me. My relations were many of them killed by them."

"Then the English armies would come over here to fight, and we were obliged to feed them, raise men, and go and fight in a quarrel of their making, in which we had no interest, and in which, if they got the better, it was of no benefit to us. But after a while Canada was taken. I wish you could have seen the gladness there was in the country then. Men who had been enemies, and hadn't spoken together for years, hugged each other in the streets. The people, wild with joy, came out of the garrisons, and went to their fields. No more Indian massacres; the mother could nurse her babe without fear, and the husband could hoe his corn without being shot at from behind the stump. No wonder, then, we were willing to do all in our power to take Canada. We were fighting for ourselves and our firesides, and we were just as eager to take this island."

"I don't understand why you were so willing to come here and fight. This island was not your next-door neighbor, and full of Indians to shoot and scalp you."

"I will tell you. France and Spain had been fighting with England. Other nations had been drawn into the quarrel. They were all more or less exhausted, and beginning to talk about peace. We were afraid, when they came to settle up, that England would give Canada back to the French, and take something else here or in Europe. Then the next time they quarrelled, it would be the old story of Indian massacres. We wanted to clear out that den of vipers. We had no idea that each would hold on to what it had taken, and thought if England could take Cuba, it might be given up at the peace, with other places, instead of Canada."

"But I should not have thought England would have ever thought of giving it up, or that you would have been afraid of it. Didn't they know it would leave you at the mercy of the savages? and were you not their colonies, their own flesh and blood?"

"Had the decision been left to the people of England, we should have had no anxiety about the matter; but it was to be determined by their rulers,

who, with a very few exceptions, had no interest in our welfare, no pity for our misfortunes. Thus we thought that in fighting their battles we were fighting our own, and, in fighting to take this place, were aiding to keep Canada.

“France and Spain had made a treaty to stand by each other against all other powers, and to share equally all gains and losses. So, when the war was over, and they came to square the yards, England kept Canada, gave up this island to Spain, and took Florida. France, to repay Spain for the loss of Florida, gave her New Orleans and part of Louisiana.”

“I don’t see how men could fight in such hot weather.”

“They died, boy, like sheep with the murrain. The strongest men would die in four hours with the fever. I have seen them drop dead dragging cannon up that hill. They had another disorder that was longer killing a man, but was horrible! They rotted alive. I’ve seen worms crawling in and out of their flesh, like maggots on a cheese; and, when men died, there was not soil enough to cover them. You would see an arm sticking out here, and a foot there. The turkey buzzards scratched them out of their graves. They were

also flung into the water, and bodies were floating around the shores. We were also in great distress for water; had to bring it clear from Matanzas, from San Juan, for this island was parched with drought. Before the rain came, we drank water from the ship that stank, and roped like molasses. You were obliged to hold your nose before you could drink.

“There were eleven men killed by one gun from the Moro. We never could have taken it without the negroes. We had twenty-five hundred of them to throw up intrenchments, carry fascines, and drag cannon. I want to tell you another thing. Some people don’t think much of a negro — consider them about the same as monkeys. Old Captain Sandford used to say they had no brains; that their heads were all solid, like a log of wood. He said he knew they were, for he had struck them hard enough with a top-maul to beat their brains out, if they had any.”

“I know better than that, sir. Flour has got as much brains as I have, and can teach me a great many things.”

“It was about Flour I was going to speak. He has as good a headpiece as any one of us. Ask him the value of Spanish money, ask him about any

of the places he has been to, the productions, and how people get their living, and you will find out whether he has brains. He can take a vessel into Havana as well as I can. He can't read or write, but he knows more of the Bible than I do, just by hearing it read. Mr. Peterson, his old master, bought him from Captain Joe McLellan, who brought him from St. Domingo. He was a kind master to him, but he ought to have taught him to read. A bigger heart never beat in a human breast than lies under that black hide. Did you see him give me that ounce this morning?"

"Yes, sir."

"What do you suppose that was for?"

"I'm sure I don't know, sir. I expect to keep for him."

"It was for his old master, who is out of health and poor. He was afraid he should get drunk and spend it. So he gave it to me, and told me to take five dollars more out of his wages, and lay it out in coffee and sugar for him."

"I don't believe there are many white men would do that."

"That is not all, my boy. I volunteered, with my ship's crew, to man a battery. I was young; knew nothing; so feared nothing. I saw a spent

ball rolling along the ground. It was going slow, and I put out my foot to stop it. It broke my leg as though it had been a pipe-stem. Flour was then not as old as you, and a boy on board, as you are now. There I lay on my back, week after week, in that burning heat. A mother could not have taken better care of me than did that boy—a Guinea negro just brought over. He would sit up in the dead hours of the night to fan me, after he had been at work all day. He would bring me drinks, and do everything that an own son could do. I never shall forget it as long as I live, and while I have a cent, that man shall not want.”

“But he beats his wife.”

“Only when he’s drunk, and don’t know what he’s about.”

“I shan’t have much studying to do on the passage home. I mean to teach him to read and write.”

“You couldn’t do a better thing. He’s a first-rate calker, too. He will larn you how to drive oakum, and larn you as much as you larn him, I’ve no doubt.”

In the afternoon they all went to walk to see the groves of palms, the orange and lemon trees, and the town of Regla. Regla is now a miserable,

dilapidated place; but then it was the great resort of slavers, and there were ship-yards, blacksmith shops, hulks for heaving out vessels, and a beach, safe from wind and sea, where a vessel might careen — and it was a busy, noisy place.

As they passed the door of a church, which stood a short distance from the shore, they noticed lights burning within.

“It’s a funeral,” said the captain. “Let us go in.”

The scene was a novel one to Isaac, and of great interest. The others had often witnessed similar ceremonies. The walls were profusely decorated with pictures of saints; over the altar was a painting of the crucifixion, and beside it an image of the Virgin Mary. There were no seats, the worshippers either kneeling upon mats, or sitting upon stools brought by negro servants. The coffin was made in halves. The part which contained the body was so thickly cushioned and stuffed, that the whole front of the body was visible, the edges of the shoulders and the hips being a little above the coffin. The body was dressed as in life, with a pair of shoes on the feet that had never been worn. The upper part of the coffin was made to shut over the other, and held by a rabbet and silver

clasps, the whole being covered with black broad-cloth, put on with silver nails. The coffin was placed upon a raised platform, which was also draped with black, and six candles of wax, three feet in length, and three inches in diameter at the base, placed around it.

When the priest had performed the burial service, it was taken by negroes to the graveyard behind the church. The master of ceremonies now, with a sharp knife, cut the clothing upon the body, and even the shoes on the feet, into small strips. The body was then thrown into the grave, a coarse cloth flung over it, and the negroes, filling the grave about half full, trampled down the earth with their feet. This was to leave room to bury another body on the top of the first. The coffin, which was the property of the church, was taken back to serve for the next interment. The Spanish custom is, to commence on one side of the graveyard, and dig a row of graves the whole length, and fill them, putting two bodies in each, lime being thrown in to hasten decomposition. When these are filled, another row is dug, till the yard has all been dug over, when they begin again, throwing out the bones of those first buried, and putting in fresh bodies. The bones are heaped up in the corner of the yard and burned.

There was a pile in the corner of that yard ten feet in height.

It is said that the priests, in some places, sell this earth to parties who manufacture saltpetre.

"What did that man cut the clothes to pieces for, captain?" asked Isaac.

"I expect it was to render them useless, lest the negroes should dig them up and sell them."

"I hope," he said (gazing with horror on the ghastly heap of skulls), "I shan't die here, to be buried in this fashion."

"It is just of a piece with their whole character," said the captain (who detested a Spaniard); "the meanest, most narrow-contracted nation on the face of the earth, and the laziest. It is their miserable religion and government that has made them so. Here is this brig. I only gave the Spaniard seventy-five dollars for his bargain. We've got her afloat already. She leaks very little, and is not essentially injured. The lazy beggar would have let her lie there till a norther came and tore her to pieces. Look at this island, the best land the sun ever shone upon; will produce cattle, horses, sheep, and two or three crops of food a year, while they buy beef, pork, candles, and almost everything of us, with our cold climate and hard soil.

“They will waylay in the dark and stab you in the back; but one Englishman or American will knock down as many of them as can stand before him. There lies that great ship they are so proud of. A couple of English frigates would fight her on her flanks, and knock her into smithereens. They never fight but they get licked and lose a slice of territory. I believe there’s a curse on them for all the innocent blood they have shed, both black and white and Indian; but not a life was lost here in vain. England had stripped France and Spain of so many of their colonies, and embittered them so much against her, that, when our revolutionary war came, they were eager to assist us, and return the compliment. Never mind how you are buried, my boy, if your sins are only forgiven; and thank God you live under a free government, and are not brought up in ignorance and laziness.”

Our readers will recollect that Captain Rhines and all his crew, except the black, were of English descent, and had inherited the bitter national prejudices in relation to Spaniards, as Catholics, slayers of Protestants, and for their attempt to invade England, and convert that heretical nation by means of instruments of torture.

It would have been very difficult for the captain

to acknowledge a single good quality in a Spaniard. He probably thought it a great stretch of Christian charity to attribute their faults to their religion and government.

On Monday the remaining portion of the cargo was discharged as the Ark lay alongside the quay. She was now taken to pieces, and her planks and timbers piled up on the beach to make use of and sell, and also the cedar.

We are sorry to say that, while this was going on, the mate and Flour both became intoxicated, and were of no use when very much needed, Seth Warren being obliged to take account of cargo, and Isaac acting as cook. As this did not occupy nearly all his time, he embraced this opportunity to improve the condition of his hens. There were vast quantities of crabs on the shore that he brought to the hen-house and broke up. The animal matter he gave the hens, and the shells furnished lime of which to form their egg-shells.

Captain Waterman, the captain of the English ship, came over one morning to see Captain Rhines, and, announcing his intentions of staying to dinner, sent his boat back, telling the captain he would like to have him send him back in his canoe.

"How bad it is," said the captain to Isaac, "that Flour is drunk just now, when we have company! You must do the best you can; kill some of the chickens, run to market, and get some sweet potatoes and plantain. I'll run out once in the while to see to you. Think you can make a pudding?"

"Yes, sir; I can make as good a pudding as Flour can, I have helped him make so many."

"I don't know about that; but it's a good thing to have confidence."

Isaac was now put upon his mettle. His whole heart and soul were in that dinner. He had every motive to excel. He wanted to show the Englishman what he could do. He wished to gratify Captain Rhines, whom he loved with an affection second only to that which he bore to his parents. He also verily thought the honor of the American Flag was involved in his success.

Captain Rhines, thinking Captain Waterman would consider it an insult to be invited to eat with the crew, had intended to dine before calling the men from their work; but he insisted upon eating with them, according to their usual custom; upon which Captain Rhines sent Isaac to tell them to knock off earlier than usual, that they might have opportunity to put on clean clothes.

The dinner was a complete success. Captain Waterman showed, by his performance at the table, his appreciation of the plum-pudding; was greatly pleased with the appearance of the men; talked with them, and was so much surprised at the intelligent answers he received, that he inquired of Captain Rhines, after they had gone to their work, in respect to their history, and was very much astonished when Captain Rhines told him that not one of those men intended to follow the sea for a living, but were laying up money to buy a farm, and stock it, and merely went in the winter to get a little hard money.

"But," said his friend, "you have no mate to oversee them, and keep them at work."

"Keep them at work!" replied Captain Rhines; "they are as anxious to work to earn their wages as I am to have them; and they know what to do as well as the mate (who is away to-day) could tell them. They are all my neighbors' sons. I have had every one of them on my knees a score of times when they were children."

"But have you always had such crews?"

"Not always. Sometimes, when I have sailed from Boston and New York, I have had to take such crews as I could get, but very seldom. I

have always had my officers from home — generally my crews. I have often taken whole crews of our boys to join vessels at Boston and New York.”

“Is this boy your son?”

“No; I wish he was. He’s the nephew of a man that I love better than any other person in the world, outside of my own family. He has always been brought up on a farm — only having been one voyage fishing — till he came here; but he’s as smart as anything that was ever done up in hide, and a born sailor. He has learned navigation pretty much on this trip; can steer as good a trick in light winds as any man; make all the knots and hitches, and, if nothing happens to him, he’ll be master of a vessel by the time he’s twenty-one.”

Captain Waterman spent the greater part of the day with Captain Rhines, and in the afternoon Joe and Seth set him on board his own ship in the canoe.

As the friends parted, he said to Captain Rhines, —

“This vessel will come down hard. When you get ready to heave her out, let me know the day beforehand, and I’ll send you my whole crew and any rigging or tackles you may want.”

Captain Rhines had felt more uneasiness in respect to the dinner than he would have been willing to own. A failure would have mortified him very much. He therefore felt a corresponding delight at its successful result. He praised Isaac in no measured terms, offering him a glass of spirit. But what was his astonishment when Isaac respectfully declined! Had a thunderbolt fallen at his feet, he could not have been more amazed.

"Not take a glass of spirit! Why, is the boy crazy? Do you think I would ask you to do anything that was not right and proper?"

"No, sir; that is not it."

"What is it, then? I should like to know what put such notions into your head."

"Well, sir, last winter I staid at Uncle Isaac's, and took care of his cattle, and went to school. I slept in the bed-room right off the kitchen. I used to hear him and Aunt Hannah talk when they thought I was asleep. He said that people were killing themselves, and running out their property, drinking; that there ought to be something done about it; that the boys were growing up in the same way, and he didn't know where it would end; that new rum was only three cents a glass, and everybody could afford to drink it.

"But your uncle takes his spirit in moderation, as I do."

"Yes, sir; but he said he wished he had never seen any, and had very strong thoughts of leaving it off altogether. He always kept his spirit in the closet in the spare room; and after that I scarcely ever saw him go in there. I thought about it while I lay there, although he never said a word to me,—only talked with Aunt Hannah,—but he said, if he was going to begin life again, he would never touch it, only in case of sickness.

"When I came on board the Ark, I wanted Flour to learn me knots and do some of my work. I thought it was the beginning of life with me, and I would do as my uncle told Aunt Hannah he would, if he was a boy, and going to begin; so I have given my allowance to Flour, and have not tasted a drop; but that is not all, sir."

"What more is there? Let us have it all."

"You know, sir, that day we had the gale of wind, and I was sitting with you on the windlass, you told me always to look into the real groundwork of things, and try to find out the reason of them."

"Yes, my boy, that's right, and I am glad to find you remember so well what I have told you."

“Well, sir, I’ve been looking and thinking. I heard you tell Captain Waterman that Mr. Strout was one of the best seamen that ever trod a vessel’s deck; that he could cut a suit of sails, or cut and fit a gang of rigging; was one of the best-hearted men that ever lived, and might be trusted with untold gold, but could not be depended upon, because he would get drunk when he came into port, and that was all the thing that kept him from being master of as good a ship as ever swum. I saw, too, that just when you wanted him most about taking account of cargo, and heaving the brig off, he was drunk; and it was the same with Flour; that when you had company, and needed him most, he wasn’t there; was spending his money, and would have nothing to take care of himself with when he is old. I put all these things together, and what I heard my uncle say. I am very sorry, sir, to disoblige you, who have been so good to me, but I have thought about it, and looked into the reasons of it, as you told me; and I have made up my mind that if Mr. Strout and Flour had never begun, they would not be where they are now, and I am not going to begin, sir.”

Captain Rhines was confounded. The clear-

headed, straightforward boy had turned all his artillery back upon himself. He recollected Isaac's encounter with the skunk, and knew that if he had fairly made up his mind that a course of action was right, he would pursue it, regardless of consequences. He was also a remarkably fair-minded, noble-spirited man, and dearly loved plain dealing. So, without attempting to change the boy's opinion, or getting angry, he merely said, —

“Well, Isaac, if you think you are right, go ahead.” And, drinking the liquor he had poured out for the boy, he left the cabin.

Captain Rhines had bought several barrels of Carolina pitch and tar of Captain Starrett; but oakum was wanting, and as the work of taking out the wet lumber, and of breaking up the Ark, was too heavy for Isaac, he told him to cut up the hawser, which had been used to frap the Ark, and was much chafed, and boil it with other odds and ends, in order to take out the tar, that it might be picked into oakum.

In the climate of Cuba, it is very difficult to keep milk. So the milkmen drive their cows to the doors, and sell the milk to their customers. A negro came down to the beach one day with his cow, and Captain Rhines, finding that he had a family

of children, hired both him and some of his children to pick oakum for a trifle more than their board.

The negro belonged to an African tribe called "Queesees," who are distinguished for industry and honesty. He bore the distinctive mark of his nation tattooed upon his cheek.

He brought with him three boys, their ages varying from twelve to sixteen years. Colon (Columbus), the oldest, was a very sprightly, intelligent dandy.

Isaac christened the old negro "Governor;" and, in pursuance of the advice of Captain Rhines, he soon began to ascertain what information could be obtained from him by a persistent questioning.

"Are you a slave?" inquired Isaac of him.

"No; I is free man, and all my family."

"Was you always free?"

"No; I was a slave eight years."

"Where did you learn to speak English?"

"I worked with English cooper. My massa hired him from Jamaica."

"How did you get your freedom?"

"I buy it."

"Where did you get the money?"

"I get it make work."

"How could you work if you was a slave?"

"Slave can work for hisself, if he no too lazy. He work Sunday, work holiday, double-cross holiday, single-cross holiday, gitee money."

"What's a double-cross holiday?"

"That's holiday all day; berry strict, like Sunday. Single-cross, half holiday."

"But if it's so strict, how can you work?"

"Priest let nigger work; massa let him work. No care much what nigger do."

"But, if there's not business doing, I shouldn't think there'd be anybody to hire you."

"O, great many holiday, — all de saints' day, — allers someting must be done; buckra man allers do someting. He get permit to discharge vessel, to load vessel. No many niggers work; dey lub best dress up, sleep, go see de sights, hear de music. Me no such fool as dat. Massa gib me piece ob land. Me raise yam, plantain, corn, garlic — hab chickens, hogs. Massa buy de chickens, hogs; gib slave bigger price dan he get in de market."

"Why did he do that?"

"Massa like hab nigger work; make him smart. He say, 'Nigger dat work for hisself holiday, he work better for him; he worth two niggers dat sleep in de sun.' I sell de odd tings in de market;

get money; bury him up in de ground; keep him buy de freedom wid. Take too long get money so. Massa hire de English cooper. Massa say, 'Quacco, go work in de shop.' Den I tink — tink when I go to bed — I tink, Quacco, if you learn de trabe, den you hab to pay more for de freedom. I cut hoop in two when I shave him; break him when I drive him. Head man tell my massa, 'Dat nigger one fool; he no get a trabe.' Yah, yah, yah! Massa say to him, 'Guinea nigger; head thick.' Now I get valued."

"What is that?"

"You don't know dat?"

"No; I don't know anything about it."

"Den I make plain; tell you 'bout de law. I go to de Alcalde, say me want to be valued. Alcalde choose two men; massa choose nudder one. Dey ask my massa, 'How much you gib for Quacco?' He say, 'Tree hundred dollars.' 'Hab you learn him any trabe?' 'No; he big fool.' Yah, yah, yah! Den dey say, 'You no learn him nottin', he worth tree hundred dollars; no more.' Dey write it in de book. I gib my massa fifty dollars; dat be put in de book. Alcalde say, 'Quacco, when you pay two hundred fifty dollars more, you free.' Den I learn berry fast — yah, yah! — make cask

berry fast. Leetle while pay massa fifty dollars. Nudder Spaniard tell me, 'You come work for me. I feed you; pay you so much ebery cask you make.' I ask massa. He say, 'You pay me one real ebery day for ebery hundred dollar you owe me, I let you go.' Me say, I will."

"How much is a real?"

"What you call your smallest money?"

"A cent."

"It be twelve ob dem."

"Then you paid your master twenty-five cents a day?"

"Yes."

"That was a high interest."

"But me make tree dollar one day, sometime four. Work ebery holiday; work Sunday; work in de night."

"I shouldn't have thought your master would have sold you to yourself when he found you was a good cooper."

"Dat de law. He must take de value when de black man put it in his hand."

"Was he obliged to let you work for the other man?"

"Yes, when me pay him de real. Den de udder free niggers, dey say, 'Quacco he owe his massa

fifty dollars; he most free; pity he work so long; pity he be whipped, if his massa angry, when he most free.' One say, 'I lend him ounce.' Nudder say, 'Me lend him ounce. He get his free papers. He pay us when he like.' So I get free."

"What did you do then?"

"I work berry hard till I buy piece ob land, build de house, get de wife. Den I fling down the adze bang in de floor, and dance and sing, work when I like, play when I like. No put any more money in de ground; spend it; hab good time; no work holiday; put on fine clothes; go hear de music; work little; play much; sleep much."

"Why don't you work, and get rich, and buy more land?"

"What de use ob dat? Dat no use; dat buck-ra way; dat no black man's way. Black man dance fandango under de tree; he no vex hisself. You go see where I live, Colon climb tree, get you cocoa-nut."

Isaac was not at all backward to accept the invitation; and no sooner was work over, than he set out.

Twilight in Cuba is very short; and, by the time they arrived at the place, it was too dark to discern

the features of the landscape ; but Isaac had an opportunity to see something else that richly compensated for the loss. They had proceeded but a short distance, when the air seemed filled with wavy lines of fire. These were emitted from the firefly or cucullo. Colon instantly caught two, fastened them to his toes to light their path, which lay through a cocoa-nut grove, intermixed with lemon and wild orange trees.

Isaac secured a quantity in his hat, spreading his handkerchief over it to keep them in.

He now had opportunity to examine them, and found them to be a kind of beetle. Behind the eyes were two yellow spots, from which came a green light ; a bright red light was also emitted from the abdomen while flying, but not when at rest, as it was then covered by the wings.

Quacco's house was made of bamboos, thatched with palm leaves, and plastered with lime mortar. It had a mud floor, as it stood on high ground, which was strewn with dry plantain leaves. The furniture of the hut was not very extensive, the bed of the parents being a hide stretched over a frame, while the rest slept in hammocks made of the twisted fibres of some plant, and filled with dry grass. The drinking vessels consisted of cal-

abashes and cocoa-nut cups, and the spoons were of wood. Isaac was greatly taken with the calabashes, and Colon gave him two to carry back, and told him, if he would come over in the daytime, he would show him the tree, and he could get as many as he liked.

They found Quacco's wife breaking up cocoanuts for the hogs, and his two oldest sons, who had been at work, one unyoking his oxen, having just finished hauling sugar; the other just returned from bringing molasses in kegs from a plantation to the quay on the backs of three mules, one being fastened to the tail of the other, the negro riding the foremost.

Quacco's wife gave him guava jelly. He filled his pockets with cocoa-nut meat and plantain, and his hat with lightning bugs, while Colon, who went to show him the way back, carried pieces of sugarcane to feed the fireflies with, some pieces of bamboo, and the calabashes full of bananas; in return for which, Captain Rhines gave him a piece of beef.

Joe Griffin, who was always ready to help Isaac, took a couple of shingles for a top and bottom, cut the bamboo into strips, and boring holes in the shingles with an awl, stuck in the bamboo, thus

making a cage for the fireflies. Isaac put them in, and gave them pieces of sugar-cane to eat, which is the food of these insects. He now blew out the light and shut the door, to make the place dark, when he found they lighted the whole cabin, and he could, by holding a book to the cage, see to read; but it was only while they were disturbed. When they became quiet, they gave little or no light.

The next morning, when they went to work, Isaac directed his conversation principally to Colon and the boy next in age — Tony; and, it must be confessed, it turned more upon the doings of the darky boys than the customs, productions, and laws of the country. Colon told Isaac so much about these matters, and a place in Regla Bay where there were oysters and shells, and about the trees, that he asked Captain Rhines to let him go in the daytime, when he could see the country; and he had also a great curiosity to see the Governor's place by daylight.

Flour having now concluded his drinking bout, and returned to duty, Isaac could be spared; and the captain, who was exceedingly fond of oysters, and all kind of fruit, gave him two days to go with Colon where he liked, on condition that they should procure oysters and fruit.

In order to make the most of their time, Colon staid all night, and slept in the galley, with Flour. As soon as it was light, they started in the canoe, and went up the East Regla Bay about a mile to a mangrove swamp. The mangrove will grow in salt water, as the alder does in fresh; the sprouts coming up from their roots bend down and take root in the bottom, crossing each other in all directions, and forming a network of arches about two feet above the mud and water in the shallow coves and creeks, upon which you may walk.

From this mat of roots spring other upright shoots, forming a dense, gloomy shade, among which the water flows at high tide, making a secure retreat for alligators, crabs, and multitudes both of sea and land fowl. To the under side of this network of roots the oysters were attached, being moistened with the water at high tide.

Here Isaac beheld large herons, with plumage as white as snow, blue and white egrets, and, more beautiful than all, the scarlet ibis and flamingo. On the high ground at the edge of the swamp were thousands of paroquets on the sour orange trees, and blue and white pigeons feeding on the seeds of different plants.

They had gathered about a bushel of oysters, when the black exclaimed, —

"Dere enough!"

"Enough! there's not quarter enough! Do you suppose we are coming clear over here losing a whole day to get a bushel of oysters?"

"Nebber did see anybody like 'Merican boy; want to make work out of play; come nudder time."

"No; we can't. Next week we shall heave the brig out, and then there won't be a moment to spare."

The negro boy worked a while longer, then announced his intention of seeking shelter beneath a tamarind tree, that, branching low, spread out its limbs most invitingly.

"I shan't go," said Isaac; "but I wish I had some water."

"Me find you water."

He took Isaac to a mahogany tree, from whose bark were growing wild pines, so called from their resemblance to the pine-apple. At the base of the leaves, which are wrapped so closely together as to form a cup, is found water. As Colon laid his hand upon one, out jumped a tree frog, that was luxuriating in the natural reservoir, which afforded more than a pint of water. Colon then procured some green cocoa-nuts, and, cutting off the top, they drank the milk and ate the meat, which, in that

unripe state, was soft, scooping it out with an oyster-shell. Being refreshed, Isaac commenced work with renewed vigor; but soon perceiving that he should by no means obtain the quantity of oysters he wanted, without aid, he besought the negro, who lay under the tree sucking sugar-cane, to help him; to which he replied, —

“What for you want vex yourself, work in de sun? Come set under de tree wid me; hear de bird sing.”

“Work first; play afterwards (lazy dog!)” soliloquized Isaac. “I’ll make him help me! I’ll beat him!” And he actually cut a stick for the purpose, when he bethought himself of a more effectual method. “Look here, Co! you come help me, and I’ll give you three ship bread when I get home.”

“I come!” replied the boy, jumping up with alacrity.

The negroes are extravagantly fond of flour bread. They eat but very little bread of any kind, — potatoes and plantain taking its place, — they being too indolent to raise much corn.

“Me show you how to get dem!” he cried; and now, all activity, he thrust the bows of the canoe in beneath the arches of mangrove roots, and cut them off with the hatchet, while Isaac scraped

the oysters, with which they were covered, into the canoe. "Now," said the negro, "we go play."

They pulled the canoe into the shade, and covered the oysters with green boughs. Colon led the way through the forest, where he often had to cut a path with the hatchet, so completely did the creeping plants, stretching their woody stems from tree to tree, obstruct their progress. They soon came to an old plantation that had been exhausted and abandoned. All over the cane-fields, and from the ruins of the building, sprang cocoa and cabbage palms, the former laden with both green and ripe fruit. Here were orange, guava, plantain, and pine-apples, mixed with forest trees, coffee, and sugar-cane, — all mingled together in one great jungle.

Here the boys feasted and lolled in the shade till thoroughly rested, and, unable to eat more, returned by the middle of the afternoon, when Isaac planted his oysters on the beach, where they were bare but a short time at low tide, as a permanent supply, to the great surprise of the negro, who had not been accustomed to look beyond the present want, and who went home rejoicing with his ship bread and a mess of oysters.

Captain Rhines was greatly delighted with the supply of oysters, and permitted him to go again the next day, giving him instructions to buy sweet potatoes, plantains, and bananas of the negroes.

Isaac had now opportunity to see Quacco's land and surroundings. The house, rudely as it was constructed, presented a most picturesque and romantic appearance from the outside, its rude walls being entirely covered with the vines of the yam and various kinds of running plants. The garden, which was four acres in extent, was enclosed with a hedge of pinguin, whose sharp spines formed an efficient protection against man or beast. Within this enclosure, and nearly concealing the hut, were plantains, which grew to a height of twelve feet, with leaves five or six feet in length, mingled with bananas of smaller growth; and at a little distance, orange and lemon trees, patches of sweet potatoes and melons, with tobacco, and Indian corn, which they cut green to feed horses and cattle. The remaining portion was occupied with cocoa palms, tamarind, and guava trees.

On a bench at the door, Quacco's oldest son was seated, silently occupied in rubbing indigo into some figures that he had been carving upon the edge of a calabash.

The first thing that attracted the especial attention of Isaac was a calabash tree.

It resembles somewhat an apple tree. He instantly ascended it, and began to throw down the fruit. It is oval in shape, of a greenish-yellow hue, and from two to twelve inches in diameter.

He cut one open, and found it was full of pulp and seeds. When these were scraped out, there remained a thin, woody shell, which, when dry, will hold water, and even endure to be put on the fire.

“How I should like to live here!” said Isaac to himself, as he looked around upon the profusion of fruits and flowers; “wouldn’t me and John Rhines take comfort here! We could hire a piece of land, and build a real nice house of bamboo, and thatch it, and have a good floor,—no mud or dirt about it,—raise coffee and corn; catch turtles; get their shells, and sell them—O, wouldn’t we go ahead! but then, I shouldn’t want to live here, after all, and I’m sure I shouldn’t want to die here; but if anybody could do as the squawks do, and had wings to fly over here in the winter, with half a dozen other boys, and live wild, wouldn’t it be nice!”

The negroes seemed to have no idea of laying up

anything; they would haul sugar and molasses from the plantations to the quay, get a little tortoise-shell, in the spring work a little on the land till they earned a small sum of money, and then have a good time spending it; in the holidays, dress up in the gayest colors, gamble, and buy tickets in the lottery; and when their money was all gone, sell their finery, come back to rags; then earn more to spend in the same way.

The ground was so fertile, so much grew spontaneously, no winter to provide for, and little clothing needed, that they lacked the stimulus for effort.

Quacco had worked very hard while fired by the desire of obtaining his freedom; but now, both himself and family were about as indolent as they could well be, working just enough to provide themselves with abundance of food; kept pigs, fowl, goats, and cows; ate, slept, and frolicked, let the future look out for itself, and were so happy that Isaac almost wished he was a darky.

They now borrowed a canoe of a fisherman that lived on the shore, went out beyond the Moro, and spent the forenoon fishing.

Isaac caught but very few fish, so much of his

time was occupied in looking at them, and admiring their beauty; they were of all colors, and of all shades of color — green, red, blue, gold, and scarlet.

At noon they returned and dined at the Governor's (Quacco's) upon fish, with a dessert of different fruits.

Isaac had brought his gun with him, and after dinner wanted to go to the mangrove swamp, where he had seen pigeons the day before, but Colon would not go at any rate, till he had taken a siesta, as did all the family; and Isaac, lying down under the cool shade of a mango, yielded to the feeling of languor induced by the climate, and was soon as fast asleep as the rest.

On their way to the grove, they passed again through the deserted plantation. Isaac noticed a creeping plant that had wreathed itself, in snaky folds, around a small tree.

"I'll have that," said he; and, cutting it off above and below, he stripped it from the tree; thus it had a straight point at each end. "This," said he, viewing his prize with great satisfaction, "cut in two in the middle, will make two canes — one for father, and one for Uncle Isaac."

On arriving at the swamp, Isaac shot several

wild pigeons and paroquets, and, breaking the wing of one by a shot, succeeded in catching it. He also saw and shot two American coots that were wintering here.

"Uncle Isaac," said he, "is always killing moose and deer. He can have a deer-horn head put on the top of his cane."

Quacco went home with Isaac, and carried a large quantity of vegetables and fruits in the cart, with which the captain was well pleased, and inquired the price.

The wily negro replied that he couldn't think of asking the captain anything for a few potatoes and yams, but would like to do the coopering. (The job would probably amount to more than a hundred dollars.)

Captain Rhines could not help smiling at the shrewdness of the negro, but told him if he found, on inquiry, that he was a good workman, he should have the job.

After supper, Isaac ran over to Quacco's again. He knew it was the last chance for fun, and meant to make the most of it.

When he arrived there, he found the whole family dancing fandango on the grass under the trees. Quacco held between his legs a hollow log, over

which was stretched a green hide, forming a rude drum, which he was beating with might and main. The oldest son accompanied him with a forked stick, across which were stretched some wires, strung with pieces of brass, which he shook and struck with his fingers—a sort of cymbal. Quacco had told them what a good job Captain Rhines had given him, and they were celebrating in consequence of it.

They had made a fire of branches of trees, which attracted myriads of fireflies that were darting back and forth in sheets of red and green light. The perspiration was rolling down the sable cheeks of Quacco, when, as the fun grew “fast and furious,” his wife’s mother came hobbling out of the house, with her cane, to look on—a withered old crone, apparently eighty years of age, much bent and wrinkled, barefoot, her toes eaten off with jiggers, and her feet as round as a horse’s.

She stood looking on, leaning on her cane. At length her old wrinkled face lighted up with the fire of other days; dropping her cane, she placed both hands upon her knees, uttering expressive grunts with her toothless jaws in time with the music; her body began to straighten, and, sidling into the ring, away she went, one hand over her head, and

the other holding up her old ragged skirt, as young as the rest.

While the old folks were thus renewing their youth, Isaac, Colon, Tony, and Pete collected at the fire a whole parcel of fireflies, strung them on strings, and hung them all over their persons, till they shone like balls of fire, and then chased each other through the dark shades of the groves, making them ring with their shouts; and concluded their evening sport with a feast of cocoa-nuts, pine-apples, sweet potatoes, and coffee.

Monday morning they brought the brig alongside, — a sheer hulk, — put a double set of tackles to the mast-heads, one set to support the masts, the other to heave down by.

Captain Waterman sent his men to aid. The hulk fitted for the purpose had two capstans, which were manned by the two crews...

“We must have a song,” said the captain, “in order to make these capstans work together.”

Flour gave the song, standing amidships, where he could be heard by both crews, and beating the time on the rail with two belaying-pins.

It was a very lively scene. Joe Griffin, Yelf, and Edwards went to work upon the hole in the bow. Captain Rhines, the mate, and Flour began

to calk the portion that was uninjured, while Quacco on the wharf was hooping the hogsheads that came out of the Ark. Captain Rhines was very proud of his bargain, as well he might be. He spared neither timber, paint, nor labor, to put the brig in the best possible order.

The mate and crew, equally interested, exhausted all the arts known to seamen.

Isaac, busy as a bee, was putting in practice his recently-acquired knowledge — making bunt gaskets for the yards, and canvas stops for the trysail. He also sewed leather on the straps of the loading-blocks, notched the edges, and painted them all bright red.

The mate and Flour made fancy man-ropes for the side-ladder and the cabin stairs.

Captain Rhines employed a workman to paint and gild the figure-head and the carved work on the stern.

But, as is generally the case, one improvement necessitated another. The sails were slightly mildewed, and did not satisfy the mate's critical eye.

"Boys," said he, "what say you to taking these sails ashore on the grass, and giving them a coat of whitewash, to take out the mildew?"

"I say, do it!" replied Joe. "I shan't feel satisfied till it's done."

When all was finished, it would have been difficult to recognize in the Congress, as she rode at anchor, the forlorn wreck ashore at La Punta. In order to have all things in keeping, Captain Rhines bought a yawl, and gave the old dug-out to Quacco.

Every part of the Ark was sold for something : the galley for a pig-pen ; the cabin to a bum-boatman for a storehouse, and even the split boards, and broken pieces of sheathing, served for dunnage.

The masts were beautiful sticks, and brought a hundred dollars apiece. Captain Rhines knew that spars always sold well in the West Indies. Therefore he had made the Ark's bowsprit and jib-boom in one piece. It ran on board among the lumber, till the heel of it rested on the keel. Thus, being a handsome stick, and very long, it sold for a droger's mast. The Ark, you are aware, was not built for beauty, but profit.

In the Congress the captain manifested that he possessed taste, as well as energy and judgment.

CHAPTER XI.

THE GOOD NEWS.

WHILE Captain Rhines is buying and taking in his cargo, let us take a look at Elm Island. When we last saw Charlie, his fertile brain was teeming with plans to surprise his mother with a crane, and to astonish John, Fred Williams, and everybody else, when he should come out with his canoe.

Uncle Isaac, true as the sun to his promise, had the crane, hooks, and trammels made; but he would by no means trust Charlie to put it in, for, should it come down when full of kettles, it might scald some one to death.

Thanksgiving afternoon, while Ben and Sally were spending the day at her mother's and Captain Rhines's, he and Uncle Sam drilled holes into the stone jambs, and put it in solid.

"There," said he, when the job was done, "you may hang weight enough on there to break the crane off, but you can't draw those dogs."

To say that Sally was pleased, when she came

home and saw the crane, would but feebly express her emotions. She was in raptures. Sally liked to have things done with despatch; and, when she was in a hurry getting breakfast, the beech withe, on which she could hang but one pot, was an insufferable annoyance. Besides, if she wanted to take a pot off the fire, or put one on, it burned her almost to death, added to which was the danger of its breaking and scalding the baby; but the crane she could swing off the fire.

Just as Uncle Isaac was going away, he saw some old blubber in a barrel at the shore, that he told Charlie would make good lampblack, and was fit for nothing else—better than pitch knots, because it would be kind of greasy, and mix better with oil.

Charlie embraced the opportunity while Ben and Sally were absent to make it, by burning the blubber under a barrel, and scraping off the lampblack which collected on the sides and head.

Lest Ben and Sally should observe his proceedings, and thus spoil all, he hauled the canoe into a little nook in the ledge—a nice, warm spot, open on the south side to the sun, but so screened in all other directions by bushes, that no one would ever see it, except they saw it from the water. Here he could work secure from detection. He al-

ready had, you know, four colors — white, black, yellow, and red. He made the red by heating the yellow ochre, which he got at the Indian campground. He was now about to paint, when there occurred a whole week of fog and rainy weather.

When at length the fog scaled, they saw a large vessel close to the island, which was flying a signal for a pilot.

Ben and Charlie went on board of her. She proved to be an English ship bound to Halifax. Having been unable to obtain an observation for several days, the captain knew not where he was, and the current had drifted him towards the shore. As the wind was ahead and light, Ben brought her into the harbor, and invited the captain ashore to dinner, and supplied them with butter and eggs.

It fell calm; the ship lay at anchor; the crew were putting the vessel to rights, and the carpenter was painting. Charlie helped them fill some water-casks, and was back and forth a good deal. When they were about to sail, the captain offered to pay Charlie for his services. He declined receiving any money, but told the captain he would like very much to have a little paint; upon which the captain gave him some green, blue, and vermilion,

which was a much brighter red than his ochre, that being inclined to a brown ; the carpenter gave him some drying to make his paints dry rapidly, and instructions in respect to mixing them.

O, wasn't Charlie a happy boy when he had succeeded in getting all this ashore without detection, and safely deposited in his house under the big maple !

As Ben refused any remuneration for milk and butter, the captain persuaded him to take a few bottles of wine. Ben piloted the ship out clear, and gave the captain his course to Cape Sable. Then, with mutual good wishes, they parted.

Now that Charlie had all that heart could wish in respect to paints, he was sorely puzzled to know how to paint his boat, in order to produce the best possible effect. He planed a piece of board, and painted it many different ways, in order to see how it would look. After a great deal of deliberation, with half a mind to let out the secret, and ask his father's and mother's advice, he concluded to use the ochre and lampblack for the bottom and larger portions of the boat, reserving the rarer paints to stripe with and ornament those parts which would be most conspicuous.

He painted the bottom inside yellow; the top

inside, and the head and stern-boards, blue; the ends of the seats green, in a half-moon shape, and the middle of them white; the oars green, with a wave-line of vermilion on the blades. The outside, where it would be under water, he painted with red ochre; next above the water, he gave a streak of green; then one of white, quite broad, with port-holes represented, above this black, and on top, a broad stripe of vermilion. He then painted eyes on each side of the bow, looking into infinite space.

Charlie was very much at loss for a name, having so many friends for whom he would like to call her. He thought he would call her the "Snow Squall," but the associations connected with that terrible hour were not pleasant.

The shades of night were stealing around him; and, as he sat with his back against the high cliff, still retaining the warmth of the afternoon sun, the hour itself suggested the object of his search.

Leaping to his feet, he exclaimed, —

"I have it! I'll call her the 'Twilight!' It's a nice name!"

He had but one paint-brush, and that was too large for the purpose. It was now dark, and he went to bed to think and contrive how to make a paint-brush.

In the morning he put some bristles into his mother's pepper-box, and shook them up till he had the bottoms even; then took hold of the top ends, and pulled out as many as he wanted that were of a length; and making a handle, with one end larger than the other, he bound the bristles very tightly around the small end of it, with their points towards the larger end; then he placed the brush over a hole in a board, and drove the handle through it; as it was largest at the upper end, this made the bristles very tight around the handle.

Charlie was a very good penman, but had never tried to print. As he was very anxious to make his work look well, and could by no means afford to waste his precious paint in doing it over and over, he cut out the letters on a piece of birch bark, fastened it on the wood, and painted through, amending, when dry, where the edges were ragged or out of line. He then painted the mast, sprit, and boom, and, when the boat was thoroughly dry, covered her with brush. The snow, falling soon after, drifted over the whole, and his secret was safe.

Ben and Charlie continued to hew timber for the barn; Ben hired help, cut spars, and made shingles to sell at Wiscasset, that he might procure nails

for his barn, cleared the land from which he had taken the timber and spars for a burn, and sold the remainder of the rifles he had taken when privateering, to pay his hired help. He based no expectations upon the Ark, and, while sending many an anxious thought after her, made his calculations as though she was not in existence.

His money was all gone. While the hired help remained they had eaten up his hog, and now they were in reduced circumstances.

We have already said that Charlie was a very good penman, and also had a good knowledge of arithmetic, being naturally quick at figures, and could beat Ben and Sally both reckoning in his head; but he had been to school but very little, and was a most wretched speller — spelling the words according to the sound.

One day, early in the winter, he was going to the store. While he was up stairs, getting ready, Ben took up his memorandum, and glancing at it, burst out laughing.

“Look here, Sally,” said he; “see how Charlie spells.

‘*Memuradum.*

‘One pownd of korffy.

Harf a pownd of tee.

Too quorts of mullasses.
Harf a pownd of purlash.
Too pownd of shooger.
Harf a bushil of korn.'

I declare," said Ben, "it's too bad — a boy that writes so well, and is as bright as he, should spell so abominably. He hasn't spelled but two words right. I must keep school this winter." Accordingly he kept school in the evenings, and every Saturday night they had a spelling school, and Ben, Sally, and Charlie all spelt, and Charlie learned very rapidly.

One morning, as Charlie was digging a mess of clams for dinner, he saw Uncle Isaac coming to the island in a most singular-looking craft, sharp at each end, long, narrow, and very much curved, and sitting as lightly on the water as an egg-shell. He ran to the house, and soon brought Ben to the shore.

"It's a birch," said Ben, the moment he cast his eye upon it.

"A birch — what's a birch?"

"Why, an Indian canoe."

Uncle Isaac was evidently in great haste, for he was on his knees in the bottom of the canoe, bare-



headed, and paddling with long and powerful strokes, making the buoyant craft skim over the waters with the swiftness of a bird. The moment he saw them, he dropped his paddle, and waving his hat in one hand, he held up a letter in the other.

"It's from father! It's good news, I know by his actions!" said Ben to Charlie. But Charlie was half way to the house in quest of his mother.

"Good news! the best that ever was, or ever will be!" cried Uncle Isaac, just as Sally and Charlie reached the shore; "at least I expect so, for your mother's is."

Charlie ran into the water, and caught hold of the birch to haul her up.

"Careful, Charlie! This thing won't bear such handling as a log canoe. I took the birch because I knew I could come quicker in her than in anything else. They say bad news flies fast: I meant that good news should fly, for once."

Letting the canoe touch gently upon the shore, he stepped carefully out, and pulled her up on the beach. They now all gathered round, while Ben sat down on the rock in the sun, broke the seal, and read the letter.

Captain Rhines, having but little time to write,

had merely told Ben about the number of days' passage, the accident that befell Isaac, and what a good boy he had proved to be; what he had sold the cargo for, and that he had bought the brig Congress, that had got ashore, for little or nothing; that she would cost him about two thousand dollars when repaired; that he intended to buy a cargo of molasses, sugar, or coffee, just which he thought he could make the most on; and that when he came home he should have good news for Charlie and John.

When he concluded there was a dead silence; the tears were running down Sally's cheeks.

"Why, mother, what makes you cry?" exclaimed Charlie.

"For joy, Charlie."

"I have thought," said Ben, "during the last month, that if I could only hear that father and the rest were safe, I would be satisfied, if I lost every bit of the lumber; but I never dreamed of such a profit as that — thirteen thousand nine hundred and sixty dollars."

"But your father!" said Uncle Isaac; "his buying that brig! only think of that! They have got a vessel to come home in; and they will repair her for very little — make her as good as new —

and make as much or more on their molasses as they did on their lumber, and then have the vessel clear."

At length Charlie, putting his arms around his father's neck, said, "There's no more paying rent, now," that idea being uppermost in his mind. "Elm Island is ours now."

"Not quite yet, Charlie. We haven't got the money, nor has the brig got here, yet. We mustn't crow before we're out of the woods."

"I wouldn't have you think," said Sally, wiping away the tears, "that it is the money makes me cry."

"What is it, then?" inquired Uncle Isaac.

"I have always had the feeling that people would say, 'There is Ben Rhines, on that rock right among the breakers, living from hand to mouth, cutting logs, and rafting boards, which Joe Griffin or any of our boys, that have not half the capacity that he has, can do just as well, when he might be in business, making the most of himself, his learning, and what God has given him; and, by and by, he'll wake up, when it's too late, and be sorry. It's all Sally Hadlock's fault, who wouldn't hear to his going to sea, when he had a vessel offered him, and a good chance to go

right into business, and declared she wouldn't have him if he did. Silly girl! she'll see what will come of it.' But now, if they get home safe, he will make more money than a score of those people, or than he would have done in years of beating about at sea, and not been out of his house a night."

"Yes," interposed Ben, "it has all come of marrying you, and going on to Elm Island. The best of the whole is, that I am not obliged to spoil the beauty of it, or cut another tree, except I like, and the brook can run singing among the tree-roots and over the ledges, as it has done ever since God Almighty made it."

"Yes," said Uncle Isaac; "and we ought not to forget that it is the same Being who made that brook on this lonely island, for the birds and sea-fowl to drink at, who gives us every blessing we enjoy. The very fowls look up to God when they drink, as if to thank Him, and I have seen the Indians,—who, many think, are no better than beasts,—when, almost dying of thirst, they have found a spring, before ever they would drink a drop, pour some of it out to the Great Spirit. And I have seen them, when they had killed a whole family, and were about to set the house on

fire, take the corn and grain, with their bloody fingers, and put it in a safe place, and leave it, because they said it was wrong to burn what the Master of life had made to support life."

"I know that, Uncle Isaac," said Sally. "I know, too, that ever since we came on this island, there has seemed to be some way provided for us. You know I was always brought up to go to meeting on the Lord's day, to the weekly lectures, and catechizing Saturday afternoons; and when I came on this island with Ben,—neither of us Christian people,—and couldn't have these privileges, I was afraid we should get to be heathen. But would you think it, Uncle Isaac? since I have lived here, I have felt a reality in these things such as I never knew before. When I have sat under that birch on a Lord's day afternoon, and heard the brook in one ear and the sound of the surf in the other, somehow I have felt that the Almighty was close to me, and that there was less between us than even in the meeting-house itself."

"Would I think it? Why, Sally, if there's a man on a'irth knows what these feelings are, I am that man. It's well for people that live together to build meeting-houses, and worship their Maker in them, and teach their children to do the same :

nothing but necessity ever keeps me away from the house of God ; but I can tell you, the best place ever a sinful man knelt to pray in, is on the roots of a tree in the trackless forest, and the most heartsome music is that which the wind makes in the tree-tops."

"Well, what are we all sitting here for? Come, Uncle Isaac, go up to the house; and, Ben, you shan't do another stroke of work to-day. Go and sit down, and show Uncle Isaac your barn-frame. Charlie, get the clams, and I'll make a chowder."

But they had been so long talking that the tide had overflowed the clams, basket and all. But Charlie went in and got them.

"I am sorry we can't give you a better dinner," said Sally, "but the truth is, it took almost every cent of money Ben had to fit away the Ark. We have had hired help this winter, and they have eaten up all the pork we killed, and what little beef Ben bought in the fall,— we don't raise anything,—and even had to buy corn for the hens. Charlie sent all the hens but six in the Ark; so I haven't got a fowl to kill if any company comes."

"Don't say a word, Sally. I'm sure we've enough to be thankful for; and you couldn't give me anything I should relish better than a clam

chowder. Would you believe it? I've been so busy finishing a room for Sam Merrithew, that I haven't dug a clam this winter; and I always calculate to have at least seven bushels in the cellar. I'm sure I wish Charlie had sent all the hens, and Ben all his cows, in the Ark. I and your mother and Ben's could have given you all the hens you needed, and never missed them."

"Why, Sally!" exclaimed Ben; "what am I thinking about? Here we are talking about not having anything to eat, and all that, when there's nothing in this world Uncle Isaac likes so well as a roasted coon."

"You spoke the true word then, Ben, for there isn't."

"You remember the time we killed that coon, when we first came on here to build the house?"

"I reckon I do; when you took him by the tail, and flung him on to Joe Griffin's back, and scared him half to death."

"Well, they've bred since then, and there's any number of them on the upper end of the island. I'll go and shoot one; I can get one any day in the year."

"Father," said Charlie, "is just like the great folks in the old country. They have their parks

and ponds, where they can shoot game and get fish when they like; and he has got his coon preserve."

"Yes," replied Sally, "and there are those bottles of wine that the captain of the ship gave you, that have never been touched. It's late to bake the coon now; so I'll have the clam chowder for dinner, and we'll have the coon for supper."

"I'll go shoot him, father."

"I'll tell you where to find him, Charlie. It's a warm day for them to be out. You go look up in the scrubby hemlock at the head of the cove, right by the great windfall, and you'll see them coiled right at the roots of the limbs, close to the body of the tree. They've got a den in the windfall; and if they are not out, we can dig one out. Come, Uncle Isaac, go and see if I have got about timber enough."

Uncle Isaac looked over the timber, running it over in his mind, and talking to himself as he stepped over the sticks. "Let's me see; front sills and end sills, plates, posts; there's the beams, girts, rafters, collar-beams. Where's the barn floor, sills, and mow-girts? I don't see them. Well, I declare, Ben, you only lack about four large sticks and the purlins! You haven't hewed all this timber yourself?"

"Yes, I and Charlie; he has hewed all the rafters, collar-beams, braces, and a good deal on the large sticks. Anybody can hew this straight soft pine very fast."

"Yes, if they are strong enough to strike right down through at every clip, as you can."

"Now, Uncle Isaac, I am going to try to frame this barn. I don't know how I shall make out, for I have not had much practice with tools, but I'm going to try. I shouldn't like to have people come here to raising, and then not have it come right. I want you to come over when I get it framed, and look it over."

"Well, I'll come over a week before you want to raise, and we'll put it together and draw-bore it. But you'll do it well enough if you only think so; that's half the battle."

"Thank you. I'll begin to frame long enough beforehand, that if I spoil a stick, and make wrong mortises, I can throw it by and hew another, so nobody shall see the blunder."

After dinner Charlie, first binding Uncle Isaac to secrecy, removed the snow and brush, and showed him the canoe. Then he took him to his house, and showed him the paint and oil he had left.

"Uncle Isaac," asked Charlie, "how much do you suppose my venture will come to?"

"I'm sure I don't know; but I should think, judging by what the boards brought, it must be considerable."

"You know Captain Rhines wrote he would have good news for me when he came home. Think it will be as much as twenty dollars?"

"Yes, I should think it might."

"Wouldn't that be a sight? Then I could have some tools, and perhaps I could earn something."

"Indeed you could, for I would hire you when I had work to do, and Ben could spare you."

CHAPTER XII.

HOMEWARD BOUND.

CAPTAIN RHINES was obliged to wait some time for his molasses, during which period Captain Starrett came back. He brought the news that there was no doubt that the Federal Union would be formed ; that New York was coming in ; that the prospect of it had already begun to influence trade, and sugar, coffee, and molasses were going up.

When they were nearly ready for sea, Captain Rhines said to the ship's company, "You know, boys, I agreed to give you four dollars per month, and Flour six and a privilege ; but you were to get home as you could. Now, here's a vessel ; I want a crew home, and we must make a new bargain. What will you go back with me for ?"

"I, for one, captain," said the mate, "will leave that altogether with you."

The others said the same.

"Well, I'll give you the same wages and the

same privileges back; and if you want to put your money into sugar, coffee, or molasses, I'll buy it for you; for I can buy it cheaper than you can, and you will make as much again on your venture home as you did on that you took out."

The Congress proved to be an excellent sailer, and a good weatherly vessel in every respect, although she was loaded "scupper to." They made Agamenticus in twelve days from the time they weighed anchor.

"I want to make a bargain with you, boys," said the captain. "I don't know where I shall sell this molasses. I'm in no hurry about selling, for Captain Starrett says it's going up. I may sell it in Portland, Boston, or New York; perhaps sell vessel and all. Now, if you will agree, after you've seen the folks, to help me get her to either of those places, and discharge her, I'll run her slap into Elm Island harbor, and give Ben and Sally a start, that'll start the hair right out of their heads."

"We'll do it," was the response.

"But," asked Joe, "if you should sell the brig, how should we get home, and get our things home?"

"I'll tell you how. The Perseverance is hauled

up at Elm Island. Ben has a lot of shingles, staves, and clear boards on hand. He can put them into her; and he, Charlie, and our John can go with us wherever we go, and bring us back, ventures and all. There won't be any wharfage to pay at Elm Island."

Just before the sun went down, Joe, who for the last six hours had been half the time at the mast-head, sang out, "I see the woods on Elm Island!" By and by he bellowed out, "There's the White Bull! I see it break!"

"Hold your tongue, and come down," said Seth. "If you stay there all night you can't see Sally Merrithew."

The wind died away as the sun went down, and the vessel made but slow progress. It was after twelve o'clock, a bright moonlight night, as they gradually neared the island. By and by the deep bay of a dog came faintly over the waters.

"There's Tige," said Captain Rhines; "he's out barking at the moon."

Silently she glided into the harbor, where there was not a breath of wind. The anchor being let go, the sails were permitted to stand. They now landed in the yawl as silently as possible. Not a word was spoken except in whispers.

"Isaac," said the captain, "Ben won't know you ; for he hasn't seen you since you was a baby. Scull the boat ashore, knock on that western window, and tell him there's a vessel in the harbor, and the captain wants to speak to him."

They all went into the cabin, which was well lighted. When Ben reached the deck, Isaac told him the captain was below, and invited him down. Ben, going down stairs, found himself in the arms of his father, and surrounded by his neighbors.

"But where did you come from, and what vessel is this?" exclaimed Ben, bewildered, and scarcely knowing whether he was in the body or out.

"This," said the captain, "is the brig Congress, Benjamin Rhines master, Benjamin Rhines, Jr. owner, with a full cargo of molasses, coffee, and sugar, on the owner's account, with some specie."

"But," said Ben, "I must go and tell Sally."

"No, you needn't. Here comes Charlie."

Sally, thinking some vessel was in trouble, and that Charlie would be wanted, had called him. He came off in Ben's canoe, and, hearing the news, went back to tell his mother.

"How do you like the looks of your brig?" asked the captain.

"First rate, as far as I can see in the night. Is she tight?"

"Don't leak enough to keep her sweet. Now let us furl these sails. Sally means to give us something to eat, for I see the sparks coming out of the chimney. Charlie has told her the news."

"I'll take care of the main-topsail," said Ben, jumping into the rigging; and the giant actually rolled it up as though it had been a royal.

"Give her a little more scope," said the captain, "for I want to go home, and so do the boys."

Sally, her handsome face glowing with delight, received them with a welcome that made them quite forget the simplicity of their frugal meal, which consisted merely of salt fish and potatoes, and a warm johnny-cake. But we doubt if a happier party ever sat down to supper. After their repast, they all went over in the brig's boat to the main land. Tige met them at the shore, and almost wagged his tail off at the sight of his old master.

"Boys," said Captain Rhines, as they separated, "to-day is Friday. I shan't start this week, but the first good chance next week we'll be off. I'll send John to let you know when I'm ready."

It was not the custom in those days, nor for a long time after that, to lock the doors; and the

precaution was especially needless where Tige Rhines held watch.

The captain entered noiselessly, with a handkerchief full of oranges in his hand, and, going to the side of his wife's bed, called her by name. She awoke with a scream that brought John and all the rest to the spot. It was a glad meeting; and the morning sun, as it gleamed in at the windows, flung its rays on happy faces. No sooner had John embraced his father again and again than he disappeared.

"Where is John?" asked Mrs. Rhines, when, with fingers quickened by pleasurable excitement, and assisted by her daughters, she had placed the morning meal upon the board. "Where in the world is our John? Breakfast is all on the table."

"I suppose," replied the captain, "he has gone to dress himself."

"He has never been all this time dressing himself. I don't see where he is. I wish he would come, for I'm sure we ought all to eat together this morning."

"So we will, wife; let it stand; I'm not hungry. I've had one breakfast this morning at Elm Island."

The moment John had embraced his father, he

dressed himself, and then ran with the swiftness of a deer for Uncle Isaac's. He found him on his knees, just kindling the fire; and, jumping on his back, bellowed in his ear, —

"Father's come, and the brig is in Elm Island harbor. I can see her masts. He's just this minute got into the house. O—h!" and without another word he rushed from the house, hot-foot, for Fred Williams. On the way he met little Bobby Smullen.

"Bobby," said he, "where are you going so early?"

"I'm going over to Aunt Molly Bradish's, to ask her to lend my grandmarm her reel."

"Well, you'll go right by the mill. Will you go in to Fred Williams, and tell him father's come, and I'm going to Elm Island to see the brig he came in, and want him to come right down to our house as fast as he can run — not to stop for breakfast, but to get breakfast at our house? And I'll give you this, and this," pulling out of his pocket a great lump of maple-sugar and two big apples, which he thrust into Bobby's hands, who set off as though life and death depended on his speed.

"Tell Aunt Molly, too," said John, hallooming after him, and then ran for home.

"Hannah! Hannah!" cried Uncle Isaac; "Captain Rhines has come!"

"Kindle the fire as quick as you can, Isaac, and fill the tea-kettle for me. I'll get breakfast in no time, and we'll run right down."

"Get breakfast! Clap your shoes on, and throw a shawl over your head; we'll get breakfast there."

"Why, Isaac! I never heard of such a thing! How it would look! They would think we had nothing to eat!"

"I tell you I'm going to eat with Ben this morning, as sure as my name's Isaac Murch."

The friendship of Captain Rhines and Uncle Isaac dated from childhood. They could not remember the time when they had not played together, interrupted for a time by Uncle Isaac's sojourn among the Indians, only to be renewed on his return. A friendship so early formed and cemented by the good offices and experiences of years, had become a part of their being, and they always called each other, except when strangers were present, by their Christian names.

John had reached home, partially recovered his breath, and they were just sitting down to breakfast when Uncle Isaac and his wife came in.

"Good morning, Isaac!" cried the captain; "sit

right down with us. I take it real kind of you to come down to eat with me."

"Hannah didn't want to come, but I told her I knew you hadn't been to breakfast, and I was bound to eat breakfast with you this blessed morning. Well, how glad I am to see you, Benjamin! and how much I've thought about you! Here were all hands, the moment you were gone, telling how you would never get there, and all that; that the lumber would soak and settle to the water's edge, and the sea would break over you, and either wash you off or tear the raft to pieces; and here you are safe and sound, and had such good luck! O, it's the master! Well, it's good calculations and a kind Providence; that's what it is."

"She did settle considerable; some of the hogs-heads had worm-holes in them, and the water got in; she was down to her wales before we got across the Bahamas."

"Well, after breakfast we'll sit down, and have a smoke, and I want you to tell me all about it, — every particular, — and about Isaac. I was right glad to hear by your letter that he had done so well. He always was a good boy, and dutiful to his parents. What an awful thing it would have been if you had lost him!"

"Do you know what this puts me in mind of, Isaac?"

"Of the times we've eat breakfast together when we were going off on a gunning scrape."

"Yes, and we will go again. Have the wild geese come yet?"

"No; it's too early; there's some whistlers."

"Has Ben got his float made yet? He had a tree cut before I went away."

"I declare Uncle Sam and I promised Ben that we would come over and look at that float-piece some day when we were out gunning, but the truth is, that we haven't been out gunning this winter; there has been no floating ice in the bay, that we might shoot siles (seals) on the ice-cakes, and besides we have both been busy. I might have looked at it when I went to carry your letter; but we were so full of good news, it slipped my memory."

"What has Ben been about this winter?"

"He and Charlie have hewed out a barn frame. Charlie sold baskets enough to buy himself a broad-axe, and he can hew right well; he has also bought Sally a crane, and Sam and I went over and put it in for him."

Breakfast now being over, the captain said, —

"John, get those oranges I brought with me, and put them on the table; and, wife, set on the decanter."

Fred Williams now came, when John said, —

"Father, may I and Fred take the brig's boat, and go over to Elm Island?"

"Who'll take care of the cattle?"

"Fred and me will take care of them before we go."

"Well, you must not stop, because some of the crew may be down, and want to go on in her, and get some of their things."

"Yes, father; we'll come right back; we only want to go over and see the brig. Father, won't you tell me what Charlie and I got for our ventures? because, you know, he will ask me."

"I can't tell, John, exactly. I sold the ventures, — yours for sixty dollars, and Charlie's for eighty, in gold, — and bought sugar and coffee with the money, and it's stowed away among the cargo, and can't be got at till the vessel is discharged; but they will come to as much more than that as the profit is on the molasses when the duty is paid."

"O, isn't that a heap of money! Father, won't you tell me what you're going to tell Uncle Isaac, this evening?"

“Yes. When you get on board the brig, tell Ben to look in the long-boat, and he will find the sail, mast, and sprit that belongs to the boat, and you can sail home.”

Having taken care of the cattle, and stuffed their pockets with doughnuts and oranges, they ran to the shore, accompanied by Tige, Fred without his breakfast.

Notwithstanding their desire to see the brig, some little time was spent in viewing the boat. They had never seen one like that before. Canoes were in universal use around there; even the wood coasters used them.

While Captain Rhines waited for his cargo, the mate and Joe exerted their skill in ornamenting the boat. Joe made the mast and sprit; the mate cut and roped the sails; they painted her a bright green outside, and blue in, except the seats, which were green. She had four beautifully proportioned ash oars. Joe put a shoe on her keel to make her hold a wind, and, instead of thole-pins, there were rowlocks cut in the gunwale, lined with copper, and the oars were leathered where they worked in the rowlocks.

Mahogany at that time was very plenty in Cuba, and used for ship timber and ships' blocks. He

had also made a handsome yoke of mahogany to go over the rudder-head instead of a tiller, and mahogany gratings to cover the bottom of the boat; so there was a level floor to walk on, and any little water that was in her would not come to one's feet or clothes. She had, likewise, on the sides, fenders made of canvas, stuffed, and painted green, and Flour had made cushions for the stern-sheets. I can tell you, it was with no little satisfaction that they pulled Captain Rhines alongside the English ship to visit Captain Waterman. Whether Captain Rhines felt any better than he did sitting in the old dug-out, with a bundle of codfish before him, I don't know; but he certainly appeared very much at home, and looked very pleasant upon it.

"I suppose," said John, as they pulled along, "this is the kind of boat we've heard Charlie tell about — such as they have in England."

"Yes, this is one kind; then I've heard him tell of a kind that had no oakum in them only in the garboard and the hood ends, but were nailed together. He said they would beat to windward just like a vessel."

"Yes, I know he did; we'll see if this one will when we get the sail — won't we?"

"You better believe that. How much stiffer she

is than the canoe! See, Tige don't heel her a mite, climbing up on the side! What do you think of it, old dog—hey? Going to see the brig and Ben?"

At the sound of Ben's name, the flapping of Tige's tail could be heard against the boat's seat.

"He knows what Ben means," said Fred.

"Knows! he knows as well as I do that we are going to Elm Island to see Ben. He thinks a dreadful sight of Ben."

Thus chatting, they reached the island, where they found Ben, Sally, and Charlie on board the brig. They saw the hogsheads of molasses, which covered the deck; went down into the cabin, and saw the captain's and mates' berths, and into the steerage, where the crew slept, which was right forward of the cabin, with a bulkhead between them.

Charlie, who was quite a sailor, having been fishing, and some few trips on the English colliers, had coiled all the rigging up, and braced the yards square. Beneath the boom were hanging plantains and bananas, some of which Ben gave them to eat.

"Now, Charlie," said John, "we know something."

"I guess we do," said Fred; "what would you give to know?"

"Is it about the ventures? Do you know?"

"Yes; father told us. Guess how much yours come to."

"Do you know?"

"Yes."

"Will you tell me if I guess right?"

"Yes."

"Fifteen dollars?"

"More than that."

"Twenty?"

"More than that; more than fifty."

"O, it can't be! You're fooling, John."

"No, I ain't — certain true, black and blue."

"Well, sixty, then?"

"More than that; eighty, and more too; and mine is sixty."

"O, did ever anybody hear of such a thing? Father! mother! did you ever hear of such a sight of money for a boy to have, and to get for such things?"

"Well, it's not money yet," said John. "Father bought sugar and coffee with the money, and it's here in the cargo somewhere, and when we sell it, it will come to a good deal more."

"I guess it will," said Ben.

"How much more, father?"

"Why, if you retail it out by the small quantity, round here, as much again, and more too."

"O, Fred, I wish you'd sent a venture."

"I wish I had, Charlie."

"Ben," said John, "father said we mustn't stop; but there was a sail in the long-boat that belonged to this boat, and we might take it."

Ben got the sail for them; then they took in Charlie, and sailed a little round the harbor, just to let him see how she would go.

"This yoke," said Charlie, "is a fancy article. I will take the measure of the rudder-head, and make a tiller. It will be a good deal handier for us, though it won't look so nice."

"I suppose, while they stay here," said John, "Ben will let us sail in her; and we should scratch this yoke, perhaps, and maybe tear the cushions."

"I guess," said Ben, "you had better hand the cushions to me, and I'll put them below, out of harm's way."

The boys now made sail for home, took turns steering, and were delighted with the performance of the boat.

"How much better this is than a canoe!" said

John; "why, she'll go right in the wind's eye. If we'd only had this boat when we went to the Indian camp ground, what a time we should have had!"

"Only look!" said Fred; "we are almost laying our course, and shall only have to make a short tack after we get across."

"If we had been in a canoe," said John, "we should have fetched in way below the house a mile, and then had to pull up against the wind."

"I hope it will come a head wind next week, and keep so; then the brig won't go, and we can have the boat to sail nights after I get out of the mill."

"Perhaps there won't be any wind."

"Then we can row; it's first-rate fun to row such a boat with such nice oars."

When Uncle Isaac and his wife went home, Captain Rhines said, "Isaac, why can't you go into Aunt Molly Bradish's, and tell her to come over here, and bring her knitting and sewing, and her turtle-shell snuff-box with the scented bean in it, gold beads, and all her fixings, and stay a fortnight, and have a regular good time?"

Aunt Molly was one of those old ladies who had retained the vivacity of youth, was possessed

of a kindly nature, a fund of anecdote, and could tell Indian and hunting stories by the hour; one whom everybody loved, and liked to have come and see them.

It was a perfect jubilee to the children when Aunt Molly came. She lived, when a girl, with Captain Rhines's parents, who were very much attached to her, and was married from their house. Captain Rhines therefore cherished great respect and affection for her. She was now a widow, living with her son, a bachelor, and, though in advanced years, managing, with some help, a large dairy. Shortly after dinner Aunt Molly made her appearance, riding horseback, on a pillion, behind her son. She was received with open arms.

"I didn't know how I could come to stay so long, Benjamin," said Aunt Molly, when she was fairly seated in the rocking-chair, had smoothed down her lap, and taken her knitting. "I didn't see how I *could* come, for I was lotting to make soap next week; and Sally Merrithew, that lives with me, — she's one of the first-rate girls (you know Sally), — but then she's not had much experience; but Isaac he set in, and said I must come, and said Hannah Murch would come over and help make the soap (and you know she's a

first-rate hand — none better); and our Sam and Sally they both set in (I 'spose Sally's heard that Joe Griffin has got home, and thought she'd rather have me out of the way); and here I am."

"And here's what your venture came to, Aunt Molly," said the captain, dropping five Spanish onzas (\$85) into her lap.

"Goodness gracious, Benjamin! why, it's goold, raal goold! Preserve us! Benjamin, this goold can't be mine; you must have put something to it."

"No, I haven't; that is just what the butter came to."

"Goodness, now!" said she, weighing each piece separately in her hand, then looking off, and wiping her spectacles, and looking at them with great curiosity and satisfaction. "Then this is raal Spanish goold! How good it does seem to have some hard money, after the poor trash we've had so long! Only think, twenty-one dollars a day was what Joe Dorset had for building Captain Savage's chimblly, when the old continental currency was on its last legs; and he said it wouldn't get him his daily bread. But this! I shall never dare to change it, for I'm sure I don't know of any bills I would take in change for it."

"I would, Aunt Molly. I wouldn't go to saving it for Sam, because he don't want you to. He'd rather you'd enjoy it. I'd buy a whole bladder of snuff, and rig myself up."

"Ho, ho, ho! Rig myself up at my time of life! It would take a pound of putty to fill up the wrinkles in my old face. But I do think I shall get a muff and tippet; and I did think I would get a new foot-stove, to keep my feet warm in the house of God; and I don't know but I should like a changeable silk: they say there's plenty of them imported since the war. If I never live to wear it out, it'll do for somebody else. You know we mustn't be too worldly."

"I would have them," said Mrs. Rhines. "I'd spend it, and take the good of it. You've worked hard all your life; and who's a better right?"

"I should like to make Sally a leetle present when she leaves me, for she's a downright good faculized, faithful girl; and if Joe gets her, he'll get a good wife. But I'm sure I shouldn't dare to marry him, he's such a harrum-scarum creeter."

"Here's something else, Aunt Molly," said the captain, dropping some flattish, dark-looking things into her lap.

"What on airth are these, Benjamin? I hope

they ain't nothing pizen, or that's got the yaller fever."

"Smell of them."

"I declare to goodness!" putting one to her nose, "if they ain't raal snuff-beans! What a beautiful, strong scent! And so you've been in foreign parts, where these grow."

"Yes; they are Vanilla beans. I've seen them running on the trees by thousands, just like wild ivy on the elms; and I got these on purpose for you."

"How thoughtful you was of an old body like me, in the chimbley-corner! This bean that I've got in my snuff-box I've had nigh on to forty year. The young man that gave it to me you knew and loved right well. It was George Strout — poor boy!"

The tears came to the captain's eyes in a moment. He was the friend of his youth, who, as the readers of Lion Ben will recollect, was lost from his side upon a stormy midnight — he knew not when nor how.

CHAPTER XIII.

JOLLY TIME AMONG THE BOYS.

"FATHER," asked John, at the supper table, "won't you take the things you have brought home out of the brig before she goes?"

"Yes, my son. I expect the boys will come in the morning, and we shall go and get all the small articles."

"May Fred go with us?"

"Yes."

John instantly ran over to Fred's, and told him.

"We've got a lot in the mill to grind, but the tide is right; I'll grind part of it to-night."

"I'll help you," said John. The boys got lights, and worked there till eleven o'clock, and reduced the bags of corn so much that Fred's father could easily finish without him.

Early next morning, the whole crew except Flour came to the beach; and while part of them began to take the things out of the brig, the others loaded the *Perseverance* with some staves,

shingles, and clear boards that Ben had on hand. Charlie and Fred were now introduced to Isaac. The boys, who were all ready to like each other, from the accounts which they had received from other parties, were supremely happy. To them was committed the work of taking the fruit and other matters to Captain Rhines's cove.

The captain himself did not come to the island, but remained at home to receive the calls of his neighbors and friends, who, he knew, would be coming in to see him, for the report had spread like wildfire all over town that Captain Rhines had come home in a brig built of mahogany, with her hold full of molasses, her cabin full of gold, and that Ben Rhines and his father were independent, and need never bring the water to wash their hands.

The first thing the boys wanted was to have Isaac tell them about his being drowned; the next, to ask him how much his venture came to. He told them ninety dollars, which, with his wages, amounted to more than a hundred. He said his uncle told him if he would go in the Ark, he would give him as much to carry as any man before the mast, and that his venture had come to more than any of the men's, except Joe Griffin's: his was five dollars more.

"What did you do with it?" asked Charlie.

"Captain Rhines laid it out for me in sugar and coffee. But come, boys, go down to my berth."

Isaac's berth was quite a curiosity, in its way; it was a lower one, and there was quite a space between it and the floor. He had nailed a board up in front, so as to make this place tight, then taken out the boards which formed the bottom of his berth, and crammed the space full of king conchs, leopard shells, and other beautiful kinds, which he had obtained from the negroes. Here were also sponges, coral, the jaws of the porpoise, which he had gone overboard in killing, and a shark's backbone — full length.

"What are you going to do with that?" asked John.

"I'm going to give it to you and Charlie. It will make two splendid canes. Just put a piece of stout wire through the joints, the whole length, polish them, cut off all the gristle, and put a point and head on. There's some coral, and a piece of sponge for each of you to wash your faces with when you go to school; but I guess you wouldn't have wanted to wash with that sponge if you'd seen it when I took it out of the water."

"Why not?" asked Charlie.

Isaac told him how it looked and smelt — a description of which our readers will find in the Ark.

“Here’s a comb to comb your heads with,” giving them a set of porpoise jaws apiece. The boys tried them on their heads. The teeth of a porpoise are very sharp, and they lock one into the other, like the cogs of a mill-wheel.

“O, but they hurt!” said Charlie.

“You mustn’t bear on so hard. I’ll give you them. Little boys ought always to have their faces clean and their heads combed, and make their manners when they go to school.”

“Only hear grandfather!” said John, taking off his hat, and making a ceremonious bow. “Where did you get all these? Did you kill the porpoise they belonged to?”

“No, Charlie; Captain Rhines killed them. I’m going to keep the jaws of the one I killed to remember when I fell overboard.”

“Charlie, I’ve got something that I brought on purpose for you;” and he put into Charlie’s hand a large piece of tortoise-shell; “you can send it to Boston, and have a splendid comb made for your mother.”

“Thank you, Isaac, a thousand times. O, I

know that will please mother so! But how came you to bring this for me before ever you saw me?"

"Because Joe Griffin and Mr. Strout told me so much about you. They said you was one of the best boys that ever was; and Captain Rhines said so, too. There was a black boy there that I used to play with. They had a lot of turtle-shell that he and his father had got. I had a knife with two blades, and a corkscrew in it. He wanted it dreadfully, and gave me four or five pounds of shell and a handkerchief for it. I suppose the shell is worth more than fifty dollars. I thought, the moment I got it, I would bring home a piece to you. I knew I should like you first rate."

Charlie was greatly delighted with this frank avowal. Isaac now produced the running plant that he had procured at the deserted plantation. "Won't that make two splendid canes, John? I brought that for father and Uncle Isaac.

"Won't uncle have a good time polishing them up?"

"Why, it looks just like a snake!" said Charlie; "does it grow so?"

"Yes; it grew around a small tree, and I took it off. They call it the "murderer" (*bijuca*), because it will begin and grow around a great large

tree, growing bigger and bigger, and pinching it tighter and tighter, till it covers it all up; and, as the tree grows, too, stops the sap, and finally kills it; then grows into a tree itself."

Isaac had nailed some beackets of rope over the top of his berth, and on the ceiling of the vessel at the side, and stuffed them full of pieces of reed, rattan, sugar-cane, and bamboo. He divided some of these among the boys.

"Now, Charlie," said Fred, "you can make fifes, squirts, and popguns to your heart's content."

It was a marvel how Isaac could get into his berth at all, or could sleep in it, after he got there. Right before it was his chest, and on his chest were barrels of bread on end; and all the way he got in was, by taking hold of the berth above, sticking his legs in between the barrels and the bulkhead, and thrusting himself in endwise.

He then opened his chest, and showed them some tamarinds in pots, and boxes of guava jelly, and told them he would invite them over to see him, and give them some. He also showed them pine-apples, and cocoa-nuts; and breaking one, they drank the milk, and ate it up. Then he showed some calabashes, which had figures of negroes, birds, fish, and flowers carved on the rims.

"How do they make them sit up?" asked Charlie.

"Sometimes they make a piece of wood hollow, and sometimes plait a hoop of palm leaf, to set them in on the table. Now, boys, I'll show you something that'll make you stare; but you must both go into the steerage, and stay there till I come."

The boys did as he wished. Then he shut the door, covered over the skylights in the deck, and made it as dark as a dungeon. Then he went to the galley, where he had a cage of fireflies, which he caught the day before the vessel sailed, fed them on sugar-cane, and kept them in the galley, where it was warm; so they were very lively.

Isaac now carried the cage into the steerage, where the boys were, and removed the cloth. They rushed round him in astonishment, as the rays of green and orange-colored light flashed through the dark place.

"What kind of creatures are they?" cried his companions.

"West India lightning-bugs."

Isaac then told them all about them, what good times he and Colon had playing with them in the night among the palm trees, and about Quacco,

and how he wished that he and they could go and live there in the winter, and live wild.

"There is one thing, boys, that I have found out I never knew before, and that is, where the squawks go in the winter. I went into a mangrove swamp gunning, and there I saw lots of squawks and coots. I shot some coots, and we had a coot stew right there in the West Indies; but I couldn't bear to fire at the squawks, because I thought, perhaps, they might have come out of our pasture, and it seemed somehow just like firing at our own folks."

"I shouldn't have thought you would," said Charlie; "perhaps there might have been some of our own squawks from this island there."

"I shouldn't wonder if there was. I told Captain Rhines about it. He said he thought the coots got blown off from Florida."

They now loaded the boat with Isaac's traps, Captain Rhines's plantains, bananas, pine-apples, sweet potatoes, tamarinds, and other sweetmeats; also with those which belonged to the crew and mate, except some which the mate and Joe Griffin had brought home for Ben. There were so many of them, that, in order to save going more than once, they loaded Ben's large canoe, as well as the

brig's boat, and took the canoe in tow, as the wind was so they could fetch both ways.

"Only see the good of having a keel-boat," said John. "We can fetch both ways now; but with a canoe, we could not fetch either way."

Charlie was in a state of great anxiety, when it was proposed to take two boats, in order to save a trip, lest the boys should ask for his canoe, as he wanted to go over, some pleasant day, and surprise his friends by exhibiting her under sail; but, seeing the big canoe at hand, their heads were so full of other matters, they never thought of her. Isaac now proposed that they should have some fun on the brig, as they could take the remainder of the things at the last load.

"I will stump you to put your hats on the main truck."

The truck is a flat, circular piece of wood on the top of a vessel's mast, with two holes in the edge of it, through which the halyards are rove to hoist the colors. Aside from the courage required to ascend to such a height, and the risk of falling, — where a fall would probably be fatal, — the labor of climbing was by no means trifling. The rope-ladders extended no farther than the head of the topmast; from there to the head of the top-gallant mast,

eighteen feet, there were but two single ropes on which to climb. On reaching the head of the top-gallant mast, there was a cross iron, called a "jack," upon which to stand, rest, and recover wind. From this point, two ropes, one on each side, called "royal shrouds," extended about twelve feet; here the rigging terminated, the mast ending in a small pole, as smooth as a spar-maker could plane it, eight feet in length, called the "skysail pole," at the end of which was the truck. Up this smooth pole the adventurers, already somewhat tired, must climb, without any aid from ropes. Here was the tug.

"I can tell you, before you begin," said Fred, "I'm not going up there."

"Go ahead, Ike!" said John; "Charlie and I will be after you; we don't take a stump."

The boys went up to the topmast cross-trees together, and then, in succession, put their hats on the truck; but Charlie was so nearly exhausted, that, although he succeeded in reaching up to put his hat over the mast-head, he slipped back, and had not strength enough to climb up again, and left it there.

"Never mind, Charlie," said John, "you did it. I'll go get it for you."

Fred stood on the deck, looking at them, and, mortified at being left behind, felt a strong inclination to follow suit. In justice to him, it must be remembered that he had been very much confined to the mill, and had never been accustomed to climb heights, though naturally a smart, resolute boy. It is only by degrees that persons become fearless in respect to things to which they are not accustomed.

Charlie had been used to going aloft. John, who, besides inheriting the strength of his race, was of iron nerve, had been accustomed to climb trees, and the long masts of the wood coasters, which never had ratlins (rope-ladders).

"Come up here, Fred," said Charlie, who had come down into the top; "here is a nice place to sit, and you can lie down if you like."

What sailors call a top is a platform at the head of the lower mast, made of timber and slat-works, in the shape of a half moon, projecting about six feet on each side of the mast. In those days they were much larger than at present, and had a railing around the after part.

It is reached by a rope-ladder, which, being fastened to the edge of the top and the lower shrouds, is very steep, insomuch that the person

going over on it hangs horizontally, like a fly on the ceiling. Near the mast is a hole, large enough to creep through, called the "lubber's hole," because used by those who are afraid to climb over.

The rigging of the Congress had been very heavily tarred in Havana. Fred ascended as high as the leading-blocks, then gave the shrouds a shake, to see if they were strong enough. The tar, stiffened by the cold weather, cracked. Fred scampered down as though the masts were going overboard. Charlie burst into a roar of laughter.

"O, Fred, I wouldn't be such a goose! It was only the tar that cracked. That rigging will bear a thousand men. I'll come down and go up with you."

The boys ascended together till they came to the top.

"I can't go over there," said Fred.

"Crawl through the lubber's hole, then."

"I don't like to do that."

"I shouldn't if I was you, for there is Joe Griffin and all the men looking at us."

"Be they? Then I'll try it."

Setting his teeth, Fred went over.

"It ain't so much, after all," said he, looking up at the other boys, who were sitting and chatting

on the cross-trees. "I have a good mind to go up there."

"I would. You can see all round."

Thus encouraged, Fred crawled up the topmast rigging, keeping his breast and body very close to the shrouds, quite unlike Isaac, who, swaying his body from side to side the whole length of his arms, mounted rapidly and gracefully. The boys could not rest till they had lowered and furled the royal and top-gallant sails.

Isaac now challenged the boys to go the rounds, down the main-topmast stay into the foretop; then down the fore-topmast stay to the bowsprit. He then went across from one mast to the other on the main-topmast stay, his back hanging down, leg over leg, and hand over hand. Charlie would not try this. John, however, followed Isaac across. Isaac had the advantage of the others, as he had practised all these things with Joe and Seth, while lying in Havana. Isaac had told the boys about warping up, and about Flour's singing.

"Why can't we have a song?" said John. "Charlie is a first-rate singer; he can read music; and Isaac can sing, too. He's been three winters to singing-school; and I and Fred can sing the chorus."

"I don't know any song," said Charlie. "All I can remember is, —

" ' Was ever you in Aberdeen,
Bonny laddie, Highland laddie,
To see the duke in his Highland green,
My bonny Highland laddie? ' "

"I can learn you Flour's cherry-bird song," said Isaac. They sat down on the hen-coop, and Isaac repeated the song till Charlie had it by heart. He then hummed over the tune till Charlie got that, and sung one verse.

"That's it," said Isaac; "that's the time. Now let's make believe get under way. John, go up and loose the main-topgallant sail. I'll get a snatch-block, so that one can take in the slack, and we'll have a song, and hoist it up."

Fred took in the slack, and they soon made Elm Island ring with, —

"Hilo, boys, a hilo."

"If you don't look out, Ben," said Joe, "these boys will heave the anchor up, or cut the cable, and run away with your brig. They have got the topgallant sails and royals hoisted up and sheeted home already."

Boys never know when to stop when they once get excited ; for what one can't think of another can.

"Let us loose the main-topsail," cried John, "then we can have a longer song. This is too short a hoist."

"We can't furl it," said Charlie. "Ben will furl it for us."

"We can't hoist it — can't begin to."

"Yes, we can," said Isaac ; "for we can take it to the capstan."

"O, that will be bully ! I know a capstan-song."

"Heave and she goes, stamp and she goes ;

Chorus. — O, my poor sailor-boy, heave and she goes."

The capstan is a very powerful purchase. Aided by this, the boys swayed up the yards, and hauled home the sheets, making noise enough for twenty men. They would have put studding-sails on her, for Isaac had actually begun to rig out the boom, when Ben, interfering, put an end to their proceedings. He sat on the rail till they had furled the light sails, and clewed up the topsail, when he made up the bunt, while the boys furled the yard-arms.

"Ben," said John, "will you do something for me ? You know I'm all the brother you've got."

"What is it, John?"

"Why, if the brig don't go, and it's pleasant next week, you be captain, Isaac mate, Charlie second mate, and sail her up and down the bay."

"That wouldn't be crew enough. You know I can't pull but one rope at a time, if I'm ever so strong."

"O, do, father," said Charlie. "I'll get Joe to go; he'll do anything in this world for me; and he'll like the fun as well as the rest of us."

"Well, I'll see about it."

"That means he will," said John to the others. Indeed, Ben's mind had been on the stretch with anxiety so long, that he had not the least objection to a little fun himself. And, though he had not any desire to go to sea again, there was a plausible excitement in going aloft and handling sails once more.

"Father," said Charlie, "could you do what Isaac and John did?"

"What was that?"

"They went across from one mast to the other on a stay."

"Come here, Isaac," said Ben. "Get on my back, and hold on tight."

The boy put his arms around Ben's neck, who, taking hold of the topmast back-stay, went up, hand over hand, and walked out on the topsail-yard, and in again, with the boy on his back, while the rest shouted in admiration.

"I can show you something worth two of that," said Ben.

The fore braces were double. Ben hauled them taut, and then, walking out on the end of the fore-yard, sat astride both parts, and hitched across in that manner. When half way across, he turned over and came up again.

"I don't charge anything," said he, "for my performance on the slack rope."

"Boys," asked John, "don't you want a luncheon?" — pulling out of his pockets a lot of doughnuts and a large junk of sugar; "help yourselves."

"What is that?" asked Charlie.

"Sap sugar."

"What is it made of?"

"Why, maple sap."

"Maple sap?"

"Yes; didn't you ever see any maple sugar?"

"No; I didn't know there was any such thing."

"Who made it?"

"Mother."

"Do tell me about it."

"Why, they bore a hole in a maple tree (rock maple), and the sap runs out into a trough, and they boil it down till it comes to molasses, and then to sugar."

"Then why don't folks make their own sugar, instead of going to the West Indies for it?"

"Because it takes such an everlasting sight of sap to make a little sugar, and so long to boil it down."

"How much?"

"From twelve to sixteen quarts to make a pound."

"Is that all?"

"Yes; ain't that enough?"

"Everybody," said Isaac, "hasn't got maple trees. In some places the growth is all pine, hemlock, oak, or birch."

"But we've got any quantity of rock maple," said Charlie, "and I mean to make sugar."

"I should think you had sugar enough now."

"I mean to sell that. Do you know how to tap trees? Come, go right off and show me."

Charlie produced an auger, and John showed him how to make the spouts and trough; and they

even had the sap running from a tree that stood in the sun, although it was early in the season.

“I tell you we’ve found out something,” said Charlie. “If there isn’t some sugar made on Elm Island, I’ll miss my guess.”

CHAPTER XIV.

ENOUGH TO EAT AT LAST.

WHEN they came to take away Joe Griffin's things, Charlie received a present that delighted him more than all Isaac had given him, except the tortoise-shell, because that was such a noble present for his mother.

Joe, who was greatly attached to Charlie, and knew precisely what would please him most, had brought him some West India woods — mahogany in boards, and one log, six feet long and eight inches square; some small sticks of *lignumvitæ*; three logs of Spanish cedar, and some smaller pieces of horseflesh mahogany (a very handsome wood, with shades and flakes in it that look like flesh); granadilla, and a piece of a tree they call "break-axe," it is so hard.

To say that Charlie was happy, would but feebly express the effect produced upon him by this magnificent present, so perfectly adapted to his proclivities. The tears came into his eyes, and, at an en-

tire loss what to say or do, as the readiest and only solution of the difficulty, he flung his arms around his benefactor's neck in silent gratitude and joy.

"If you had burned me up, you young sinner," said Joe, patting him fondly on the back, "in the brush, when you set out to, you wouldn't have had all this. Now you've got business enough to employ you till you're twenty-one."

"O, Joseph, I didn't mean to burn you up! I was only in fun, and meant to drive you out."

"Meant to be even with me."

"Yes; that's it."

Charlie was now somewhat in the condition of Aunt Molly Bradish with her Spanish gold, or like the boy who had an apple so big he couldn't bite it, and didn't know what to do with it. "O, I shall never dare to cut such nice wood."

"There will have to be a good many talks with Uncle Isaac about that, I reckon," said Joe.

Gloating over his treasures, like a miser over his gold, Charlie deposited his wood in the front room.

By night, there were so many of them, they had the *Perseverance* loaded. The *Perseverance* was named from her peculiarly weatherly qualities, and her ability to contend with adverse winds. No

matter how sharp the sea, with reefed sails, and the bonnet off her jib, she would put her sharp nose through the sea, and work to windward. She was what was then called a Chebacco boat (Indian name of Essex).

In the early years of the colony of Massachusetts, there were people at Chebacco who originated a peculiar model of boats; they were sharp at each end, and pink-sterned, decked over forward and aft — a space being left in the middle in which to stand and fish, and which, in bad weather, could be covered with hatches. At first they were but ten or fifteen tons burden, but were gradually increased in size; had two masts, but no bowsprit; the stern came up above the deck with a notch in it, through which to haul the cable. But the *Perseverance* was a Chebacco boat with improvements. While the peculiar model was retained, certain improvements, in accordance with the ideas of John Strout, were added, which were a bowsprit, a rail, and deck over the whole vessel. The rigging was also fitted, and every rope pointed and grafted in a manner not to be seen on board fishermen.

John Strout was unmarried; the sole survivor of his family. The schooner was all the property he possessed, and he was very proud of her. He

picked up a good deal of money in her, and in other ways; but, being a careless, free-hearted fellow, spent and gave it away, making his home, when not at sea, either at Captain Rhines's or with Uncle Isaac, and was a universal favorite among the young people, although the older ones shook their wise heads at his want of economy.

Just before night, Uncle Isaac came on with Captain Rhines in the captain's canoe. He was as much delighted as Charlie with the wood. "We will talk about that some other time, Charlie," said he; "but what I've come on *now* mostly for, is to see that float-piece."

Uncle Isaac now went on board the Congress, with Ben and Captain Rhines, and examined her from stem to stern.

"She's a beauty!" said Uncle Isaac. "How much did you give for her?"

"I bought the hull, as she lay on the rocks stripped, with only her lower masts and bowsprit in, for \$102, and I sold the Ark's bowsprit for \$100."

"But why didn't they get her off themselves?"

"Too lazy; it would have taken them a week, with thirty or forty darkies. We got her off in one tide, with the help of the crew of an English

ship. Another Spaniard had bought the spars, sails, and rigging. I gave him about \$500 for the rigging, and \$400 for the sails. I haven't figured it up close yet; but, when she was ready for sea, she stood me, repairs and all, about \$2000."

"Yes, and she's worth \$5000, and more too."

"You can see what a lazy, shiftless set these Spaniards are: the brig's masts and bowsprit belonged to him, but he was too lazy to take them out, and bought the Ark's masts of me for a droger, because they were all out on the beach ready to hook right on to."

"I reckon," said Ben, laying his hand on the shear-pole of the topmast backstays, which was very neatly grafted, "this is some of Flour's or John Strout's work."

"No, it ain't," replied the captain; "it's Isaac's; the becket on the tiller, the bunt-gaskets on the topsail-yards, and the leathers on the leading-blocks, are all his work. He's a boy and a half, I tell you; he can keep a vessel's way as well as I can."

"I'm right glad to hear that," said Uncle Isaac; "for my brother is having a hard time of it, just now, with a new farm and a big family; but he's a tough, resolute man, and he'll win through it."

Isaac always seemed to have a great love for me ever since he was a baby. He has been to our house a great deal, and is just as near to us as our own children."

"Well, father," said Ben, "by sundown the Perseverance will be loaded, and sails bent, ready for a start. I don't see how I can go with you. John Strout and the boys will be crew enough for the Pinkee, and the others for the Congress; somebody must stay at home to take care of the cattle."

"I think you had better go, Ben; you will want to see Mr. Welch, and take up your mortgage, for I expect we shall do better at Boston with the cargo."

"Sam and I'll come on, and make the float," said Uncle Isaac; "and we'll take care of the cattle."

"You don't want any help from me, father, about selling, and you can take the mortgage up. I want to get my barn up, and want Uncle Isaac to look the timbers over, while he is here, and I want Uncle Sam to underpin it for me. I want also to get my spars to Wiscasset; they are all in the water, and rafted."

"Well, about the men. I think we ought to make them a present besides their wages."

"Do just as you like, father; whatever suits you suits me."

"About the brig; I may have a chance to sell or charter her."

"Do you want her to go in?"

"No. I've always noticed that when a man has remarkable luck, and is not satisfied, but wants to get everything, he often meets with a head flaw, and loses all he has earned. I am satisfied. I don't believe in laying up property for children, just to render them good for nothing. Let them get it as their fathers did before them. Look at Mr. Welch's children."

"Well, father, do as you think will be for the best — sell or charter her; or, if you can't do either to your mind, I will cut a cargo of lumber, and we will run her on our own account. I shall have to clear some more of this island, in order to have land enough for tillage and pasture. There are some of our boys here who would be glad enough to take her, and it would help some young fellow that's starting in the world. Times are getting better every day; we might run her till this suit of sails is about gone, and then sell her for as much as we can get now. I want you to bring me home a hogshead of molasses, a barrel of sugar, and two

bags of coffee; for I can sell what I don't want, right on this island, to fishermen; and I want to give the minister a bag of coffee."

"I am going to give him a barrel of sugar," said the captain.

Ben had a large family at the supper table — no less than ten, besides their own family. A few days before, they would have eaten up all he had in the house; but Captain Rhines had brought home some gold, which belonged to Ben, being a surplus, after paying for the Congress and her cargo.

Therefore, the first trip the boat made, Ben sent to the store and obtained whatever they needed. Uncle Isaac, ever thoughtful, had brought on a hind quarter of a calf he had killed that morning; and plenty of beef and pork, sweet potatoes, oranges, plantains, and cocoa-nuts were brought up from the brig; and a better feast or merrier time than they had that night at supper, does not often fall to the lot of mortals.

"We've had something to eat at last," said Sally. "I suppose you thought you was coming to such a poor place, you would bring your own victuals this time."

"I didn't think any such thing. I'm sure I

never want a better dinner than I had the last time I was here ; but I thought a little fresh meat would come handy."

"I am much obliged to you, and I hope now we shall be able to let the clams rest and grow a while. I can tell you, Uncle Isaac, I like clams, coots, and sheldrakes as well as anybody ; but, for the last twelve months, I have had about as many as I want. Now, you know, you've been doing for mother and the children ever since my poor father died, and for Ben and me ever since we were married, — all the time working, planning, and advising for us. I am in hopes we are going to see the time when we can pay back some part of the debt."

"I'm sure, Sally, you know how much I thought of your father ; and I couldn't do any more for his children than he would have done for me or mine."

When the meal was concluded, Charlie besought John and Isaac to stay all night.

"Stay, boys !" said Ben ; "the boat will be deep loaded with traps and men. We are going over to meeting in the morning, and will take you home."

They accordingly stopped, and slept three in a bed ; that is, what they did sleep, for they kept Isaac talking half the night about what he saw and what he did in the West Indies.

“What a fine fellow Isaac is, John!” said Charlie. “He isn’t a mite stuck up, for all he has fallen overboard, been to the West Indies, and can navigate a vessel.”

“He wouldn’t be any relation to Uncle Isaac if he was; besides, he hasn’t seen so much as you have; he hasn’t been to London.”

The boys told Isaac more about Fred; what a bad boy he had been, and what a good fellow he was now. Charlie gave them some fruit, a calabash, an orange-wood sprout for a cane, and a cocoa-nut, to give Fred, that he might have occasion for enjoyment as well as they.

CHAPTER XV.

TEA PARTY ON BOARD THE CONGRESS.

JUST before the company left, Ben took Joe Griffin aside, and said to him, "These boys have been at me hard a-weather to get the brig under way, and let them put her about, and sailorize a little; and I've half a mind to gratify them."

"I would. Where can you find a better set of boys? or boys that will work and stick to it like them? And if they want a little fun, let them have it. They'll work all the better for it."

"But it would hardly pay to get the brig ashore; and I suppose it would spoil all their fun if they didn't have all sail on her. Will you go with us?"

"To be sure I will, and bring Flour. Don't want any better fun."

"Then we shall be whole-footed, and can handle her like a top. There's another thing I've thought of. This is the first square-rigged vessel that ever was owned about here, and everybody is dying to see

her. I've been thinking I would run her over into our cove, have supper aboard, and invite the neighbors, and those who helped me in my days of poverty, to build this house."

"I would, Ben. How they would like it! and what a good time we could have!" said Joe.

"Father and mother could come, and our girls; Uncle Isaac, Uncle Sam, and their wives; and your girl, Joe, and Seth Warren's."

"Yes, and old Aunt Molly Bradish. She's making a visit at your father's."

"That will be the best of the whole. I should like to see the good old soul on board. It would bring a blessing on the whole concern."

"When would you have it?"

"Monday night, if it is fair weather. If not, the first fair day."

"Well, I'll invite them to-night, and to-morrow at meeting."

"I'll run her over in the forenoon. Then Flour can have all day to get ready. Mother and Sally can cook up some victuals, too."

"I'll come on Sunday night, and bring Flour, and then he'll be sure to be sober."

Monday morning dawned brightly. Joe had brought over Flour and his "ole woman," as he

called his wife, who was a capital cook, and Seth Warren.

They took away the bulkhead, made the cabin and steerage all in one, and Joe, Ben, and Charlie rigged up a long table in a short time. They did most of the cooking on the island, — when Charlie's crane came into play, — only making tea and coffee on board the brig.

The boys came over by six o'clock, and, leaving Flour's wife and Sally to do the cooking, assured that the same thing was going on at Captain Rhines's, they proceeded to get the brig under way.

Fred had already made such proficiency, that he loosed the fore-topgallant sail, while the boys were loosing the royals. They had plenty of music with the black on board, who sung songs Isaac had never heard before, and which exceeded all the former ones.

With Ben and Flour at the windlass, the anchor was soon hove up. The water was very bold near the main shore; and, as the Congress sailed up and down the bay, now beating, now before the wind, everybody had an opportunity to see her. She was quite near the shore when she tacked the first time, and the way the boys made the yards

whirl, right in sight of their parents and neighbors, when Ben sung out, "Let go and haul!" was not slow, I can tell you.

After sailing a while, they ran the brig into Captain Rhines's cove, and all went up to his house to dinner.

"Aunt Molly," said the captain, "you are going aboard the Congress to supper. Ben has sent a special invitation to you to come, and he won't like it if you don't."

"I'm sure, Benjamin, I should like to go, above all things, but I'm skeered to death to."

"There's nothing to be afraid of. Old Mrs. Hadlock's going."

"Old Mrs. Hadlock! Massy sakes! She's a terrible ventersome critter. She's no guide for anybody. But how could I get in, my head would fly round so? I'm sure I should like right well to go. Wal, now I'll tell you — I hope you won't be offended, any of you: there's just one man, and *but* one, in this world that I would trust to carry me aboard, and that is Ben. If Ben will carry me up the side, I'll put myself in his hands."

"I will, Aunt Molly," said Ben. "I'll put you into the boat, and go off with you."

After dinner the boys went over to the island, turned the calves loose to suck the cows, as there would be nobody to milk them, took Sally and Flour's wife, with the provisions, into the Perseverance, and brought them over, and anchored near the Congress. When it was time to go on board, Ben put Aunt Molly into the brig's boat, and, when they came alongside, the brig was so low in the water, being deep laden, that Captain Rhines and Uncle Isaac held the boat close to the vessel, and Ben, taking his aged charge in his arms, stepped over the side, and deposited her on the hen-coop.

"So this is a vessel," said the good lady, with some perturbation, in tones which were full of awe. "And it's painted green, and beautiful colors! What a nice seat this is! anybody could almost set here and knit. What is this place underneath for, Benjamin, with the slats all painted green?"

"That's a hen-coop."

"A hen-coop! Do they paint hen-coops? They must be made of money, I should think. 'Twas an awful waste."

"These, Aunt, are not merely to put hens in, to carry to the West Indies to sell, but for the ship's use; and, as we want something to sit on, the coop

makes a good seat; and, as it is a part of the vessel, we paint it."

"I should think the hens would be skeered to death and die in these, especially hens that have always lived in the country. If they'd been brought up in a village place, I 'spose 'twould be different."

"They do very well if there are not too many together, and often lay eggs."

"Lay! They must have good courage. But I 'spose it's so ordered."

The brig had a deck-load of molasses, which was covered with boards to keep the sun from the casks, and facilitate getting about deck. Ben moved the boards on one side, that she might see the hogsheads, and explained to her that these were but few in number in comparison with those below.

"O, Isaac! Mrs. Hadlock, did you ever! He says these are nothing to what's down cellar. But what are these long things, sticking up in the air, with great ropes on 'em to keep 'em from falling over. They won't fall on anybody — will they?"

Ben told her they were the masts. But, as he could not make her understand how the sails were spread and propelled the vessel, he told Isaac,

who was by no means loath to exhibit his skill in seamanship before his uncle and the neighbors, to loose the fore-royal.

"O, don't, don't!" cried Aunt Molly; "I beg of you, don't!" as Isaac ran up the shrouds, causing them to spring beneath his tread, and the trucks in the leading-blocks to rattle.

"Isaac Murch, will you let your nephew go up there? The child's blood'll be on your head. Captain Rhines, do forbid him!"

"He wont fall, Aunt Molly; sailors never do. He's been up there every day, and many times a day, during the passage home."

"Wal, I must believe *you*; but I suppose it's all ordered."

They hoisted the sail up, in order that the old lady might see how the sails carried the vessel.

"Ben," said she, solemnly, "I took you in my arms, the first person, when you was born into this world. But sartainly I never thought you would be permitted to own a ship, and all this molasses, and I should be spared to see it. And they tell me there's sugar and coffee, too. But we're poor, ungrateful critters — that's what we are, the very best of us."

"Well," said the captain, "what do you think of her?"

"Think! I'm so flustered I hain't got any thoughts. Come here, child," she said to Isaac, who had just reached the deck; "let me feel if any of your bones are broken. How can you smile? You've had a wonderful escape. Wal, neighbors," by way of summing up, "I've read in the Scriptures about those that 'go down to the sea in ships,' and now I've been permitted to see it at my time of life. I'm sure I've a great deal to be grateful for. I hope I shall be a better woman."

"Come, Aunt Molly," said Ben, "go down into the cabin. Supper is ready."

"What, down cellar! I've got nothing but thin shoes on. Shan't I wet my feet?"

"No, there's no water; it's as dry as a house floor."

Great was her surprise when she entered the cabin, and saw the table set and covered with food, and Flour, with his wife, ready to wait on the company. Sally, despite her endeavors to resign in favor of Mrs. Rhines, was compelled to sit at the head of the table, and turn out the tea. Aunt Molly, enjoying a vigorous old age, dearly loved good things, and relished keenly a cup of tea. She conversed but little during the meal; but, as the demands of appetite slackened, she

observed, "Who would think a vessel could be so much like a house? A table; folks eating; Sally sitting up there and turning out tea, just as though she was in her own house. But what are these places on the side, with curtains on them?"

"Those are the berths where we sleep;" and the captain held up the pillow and the blankets.

"Sleep! Wal, I 'spose sailors must sleep, for every human being must. But, my goodness! I should think they would have to sleep standing up, a watching and a praying every moment, lest the vessel should tip over. But to think of having blankets and pillow-cases, and lying down in a bed! Wal, I 'spose it's all ordered."

As there was not room enough for all to sit down together, the old folks were first served. As it was but four o'clock in the afternoon when supper was put on the table, in order that the old ladies might get home before dark, the young folks enjoyed themselves on deck while they were eating.

When all had been served, the long, wide table was removed, which gave room enough for all. Then oranges, pine-apples, and cocoa-nut meat were carried round by the boys. Aunt Molly had been greatly interested in some baked sweet

potatoes, which were on the supper table. She had never seen or heard of such a thing before, and had begged a raw one to put in her pocket.

"I don't think it so strange," said she, "that oranges and sich like should be sweet, because apples are; but that potatoes should be! I 'spose they must put molasses in the hills when they plant 'em, and that's the reason they are so yaller."

"I'll give you half a bushel to carry home when you go," said Captain Rhines. "I'm glad you are so fond of them. There are some under my berth, that the boys didn't find."

"Wal, now, what a thing it is, that people like Captain Rhines should have that courage given them to go through so much, to bring us molasses, tea, coffee, silks, satins, and scent-beans to put in our snuff (that minds me, Mrs. Hadlock, that I haven't offered you a pinch out of my box to-night), and go where the yaller fever is raging, and way up in the sky to fix the sails, and under water to sleep. We ought to think a sight of them, and I'm sure we ought to pray for them."

"You never said a truer word than that, Aunt Molly; and I can tell you, whether a man is just what he ought to be, or not; it's a satisfaction to him, when alone at sea, to think that those who love him are praying for him."

"I declare, Benjamin, I begin to feel quite at home, 'specially sence you spoke those good words, for I always feel at home where good words are spoken: and when I look at that dear little innocent baby, sleeping so sweetly in his gran'sir's bed, — he's the very image of his father, — I hope he'll be as good a man. I declare, I've a good mind to take out my knitting-work. I wonder if 'twould be any harm to knit on board a vessel — any bad sign or anything."

"Harm! No, Aunt Molly; make yourself at home."

"My old fingers have worked so much, I don't feel at home without I'm doing somewhat, or have something in my hands. But there's one thing seafaring men don't have to contend with — there's no Injuns to tomahawk and sculp (scalp) them, because there's no windfalls and stumps for them to hide behind. Wal, sailors ought to be the very best of men; and I 'spose they are. I think ministers ought to pray for them on the Lord's day, when they pray for General Washington. I 'spose they have so many things to think of, they forget it. 'Out of sight, out of mind.' But I mean to put our minister in mind of it; and then perhaps he will, when I tell him I've been and taken tea in a vessel."

"If he don't, I won't give him another barrel of sugar."

"I hope, Aunt Molly," said Ben, "after you get through at father's, you will come on to Elm Island, and make us a visit."

"Yes," said Sally, "and stay a month."

"And who would milk my cows, and make all my butter I'm going to send to the West Indies, when Captain Rhines goes again."

"Let somebody else milk them; you've done work enough."

"You must be out of your heads, all of you, to think of a person at my age going on that island. Not but what I've been there, and should like to go again; but I've already lived past the age of man."

"If you have," said the captain, "you haven't lived past the age of woman; for my mother was ten years older than you when she died. Come, Aunt Molly, if you'll promise to go on after you've finished your visit at our house, I'll carry you on in the *Perseverance*."

"Wal, now, Benjamin, if sich a thing should be, — I say if sich a thing should be, — that I should take it into my head to go, there's but one way I should feel safe to go; and that's in a birch."

"In a birch!" exclaimed the whole company, in amazement.

"Yes; you know everybody feels most at home in what they've been used to. Now, I never was in a vessel before, but I've been hundreds of miles in a birch, and, when I was young, could paddle one as well as an Injun squaw. The first farm we lived on was up the river, and I used to go to mill in a birch. If Isaac will take me on in his birch, I might (if I'm spared) go. Then, if anything should happen, I could, perhaps, paddle myself; but I'm sartain sure I couldn't do anything in a vessel."

Our young readers must not suppose that Aunt Molly was deficient in courage, because of her simple goodness, and her timidity on board ship. Though now a little in her dotage, she had been as resolute a woman as ever faced the hardships of frontier life.

When the merriment, which her novel method of transportation occasioned, had subsided, Mrs. Rhines said, —

"Aunt Molly, you can't be in earnest."

"Sartainly I am."

"But what if there should come up a squall?"

"Couldn't a squall come if I was in a vessel?"

"Yes, but you would certainly be safer in a vessel than in a canoe."

"Indeed, I'm not so sartain of that, Mrs. Rhines. Isaac's birch is very large (with only him and me, she would be like an egg-shell; no water could get into her; for I'm not much heavier than a peck of bran just ready to blow away), letting alone that we shouldn't set out in a squall; and, if we saw one coming when we were half way over, — a birch goes so like a spirit, — we could go over twice before a squall could strike."

"Aunt Molly is right," said Uncle Isaac; "she knows more about canoes than any of you."

"But how did you learn to go in a canoe?" asked Charlie. "Was you ever a prisoner among the Indians, like as Uncle Isaac was?"

"No, my dear; but, before the war broke out, we had Injun playmates; the Injun boys and girls used to be in our houses, and we used to be in their wigwams. From them I larnt to paddle a canoe, and walk on snow-shoes.

"You must know, neighbors, that I never had any beauty, nor much larning, but was a rude, tearing critter when I was a gal, and grew up pretty much like the cattle. We lived right in the woods in a log-house. My father had five boys. I was the

only darter. Mother had a great deal to do, and very little to do with. We were very noisy; and so, while we were too small to be of much use, she was glad to have us out doors. As there was no gals for me to play with, I played and worked with our boys; whatever they did, I did. I could paddle a canoe, fire a gun, fall a tree, or drive oxen. When I grew older, and father got land cleared, kept cattle, had wool and flax, I learned to spin, weave, milk, and make butter and cheese. We lost a great many sheep by wolves, and hogs by bears, but still we made out to keep a good many."

"Hogs, by bears!" said Charlie.

"Yes, dear, a bear, 'specially a she one that has cubs, will take a hog up in her fore paws, and walk off on her hind legs, carrying Mr. Hog, squeal and all. Joe Griffin's father lost one that same way this very winter. That's the way this old critter that's talking to you grew up, as I said before — pretty much like the cattle.

"I'm sure, Benjamin, I don't know what would have become of me if I hadn't gone to live with your mother, and had the benefit of her prayers and advice, and the privilege of going to meeting, which kept me down a good deal. I've wondered

